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ABSTRACT

This action research project implemented and evaluated a program for addressing the motivation of kindergarten, first-, and second-grade students by increasing parent participation in their children's schools and education. The problem of low motivation was documented through parent, teacher and student surveys, and analysis of student performance evaluated through assessments, checklists, and observations. Analysis suggested that societal factors related to family structure and parental non-involvement in the educational process might be contributors to the problem. A parent education and involvement program was developed, with components including a Read to Succeed (read aloud) program, Pull the Plug on television activities, take-home activity bags, and parent make-and-take workshops. Evaluation of the program suggested positive results due to increased parental involvement in their children's education and successful achievement; when both teacher and parent took part in this process, children tended to show more interest and independence in their work at home and at school. Children showed increased vocabulary, self-adequacy, and self-worth. A significant rise in motivation from both parent and child was noted, and the home-to-school and school-to-home relationship appeared strengthened. (Eighteen appendices include student interest surveys, parent and teacher surveys, Read to Succeed program materials, Activity Bag activities, Pull the Plug materials, and Make-and-Take workshop materials.) (JPB)

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# REINFORCING STUDENTS' MOTIVATION THROUGH PARENT INTERACTION

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An Action Research Project Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the

School of Education in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching and Leadership

Saint Xavier University & IRI/Skylight

Field-Based Masters Program

Chicago, Illinois

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## DEDICATION

TO:
Jakes Pizza
and
our families for their love and support

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# ABSTRACT

This report describes a program for addressing student motivation. The targeted population consists of Kindergarten, First, and Second grade students in two growing middle class communities located in a Northwestern suburb of a large Midwestern city. The problems of low motivation will be documented through parent, teacher, and student surveys, and analysis of student performance evaluated through assessments, checklists, and observations.

Analysis of probable cause data reveals that societal factors related to family structure and parent non-involvement in the educational process may contribute to this problem. Reviews of faculty surveys and current research reveal a need for a program which increases parental education and involvement.

A review of solution strategies suggested by knowledgeable others, combined with an analysis of the problem setting, resulted in the selection of the interventions. This parent education and involvement program consists of the following components:

* Read to Succeed/Read Aloud
* Pull the Plug TV Activities
* Take Home Activity Bags
* Parent Make and Take Workshops

The researchers have seen positive results due to the effort of becoming involved with a child's education and successful achievement. When both teacher and parent are taking part in this process, children tend to show more interest and independence in their work at home and at school. With the reinforcement, attention, and open communication the child received, signs of being a life long learner were evident. Each researcher noticed a significant rise in motivation from the parent as well as the child.

# CHAPTER 1

# PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

## General Statement of the Problem

There is a weakened home-to-school, school-to-home relationship. When this relationship is weak, parents do not always know WHAT and HOW their children are learning in school. Lack of motivation is a concern for the targeted kindergarten, first, and second grade classes. Evidence for the existence of the problem specific to these students includes, a review of parent, teacher, and student surveys, along with teacher observations.

## Immediate Problem Context

### Site 1

The school has an enrollment of 362 students. The major ethnic groupings include: White non-Hispanic (92.8%), Black, non-Hispanic (0%), Hispanic (3.3%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (3.9%). Low income families in the community are described as those receiving public aid, living in institutional settings, being supported in foster homes with public funds, and receiving free or reduced-priced lunches. Five percent of the students are eligible for bilingual education. An attendance rate of 96.6% has been recorded for this school. During the course of the year, students enroll and/ or leave at the rate of nine and three-tenths percent. No chronic truancy has been reported.

The full time staff at site one consists of: one principal, one secretary, seven and one- half primary teachers, seven and one- half intermediate teachers, one Special Education Director, and one Learning Center Director. Part time staff that share time with other schools in the district consists of one physical education teacher, one music teacher, one gifted teacher, one English as a second language teacher, two special education,

one nurse, one art teacher, and one social worker. District wide teachers have an average of 14 years experience. Eighty-one percent have a master's degree or higher. Three of the teachers at this site are male.

Within the school there exists two and one-half sections of kindergarten, three sections of first grade, two and one-half sections of second grade, two and one-half sections of third grade, two and one-half sections of fourth grade, and two and one-half sections of fifth grade. The average class size is twenty-one and seven-tenths pupils. Time devoted to teaching of core subjects per day is as follows: mathematics is taught approximately 48 minutes, 24 minutes for science, 126 minutes for language arts, 28 minutes for social Studies, and 36 minutes for fine arts that include art, music, and physical education.

Eleven of the targeted second grade students were placed in a first and second grade combination class that was team taught. situation during the 1995-1996 school year. The other 12 students came from regular first grades. The 11 team taught students were in the placement of the researcher last year as well as this year.


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The parents and students of one second grade classroom are the target group for the study at this school. The reading program comes from Houghton-Mifflin, combined with major author studies and Whole Language thematic units. These targeted children are in their third year of the University of Chicago Math Program adopted by the District. This program includes a spiraling scope and sequence for kindergarten through fifth grades. It is a hands-on higher level thinking program. The program contains activities that encourage students and their parents to work on mathematical related situations together. A few examples are: Home-Links which reinforce skills taught at school, and simple projects that reflect the skills being taught. Additional skills are supplemented by the individual teacher and reinforced by the parents

## Immediate Problem Context

### Site 2

Site two has a total enrollment of 358 students. The major ethnic groupings include: White non-Hispanic (93.3 %), Black non-Hispanic (0.6 %), Hispanic (3.1 %), and Asian/Pacific Islander (3.1%). Due to the rounding of percentages, the figures do not equal 100 percent. Two percent of the students in the Community come from

families categorized as low income families. These are described as those receiving public aid, living in institutional settings, being supported in foster homes with public funds, and receiving free or reduced-priced lunches. Three and six-tenths percent of the students have been found to be eligible for bilingual education. The school's attendance rate is 96.2 % with a student mobility rate of 5.1 %. No chronic truancy has been reported.

The full time staff at site 2 consists of: one principal, one secretary, eleven primary teachers, nine intermediate teachers, one gifted teacher, one Title One Reading teacher, one Social Worker, two Special Education teachers, one Speech and Language Pathologist, five specialized aides, and one Learning Center Director. Part time staff consists of : two Physical Education teachers, one English as a Second Language teacher, one Music teacher, and one Art teacher. District wide, teachers have an average of 13.9 years of experience and 50.8% have a master's degree or higher, and two of the teachers are male at this site.

Within this school the K-5 classrooms are self-contained. Students are randomly assigned to the classrooms at all levels. Each individual teacher is responsible for teaching all curriculum subject areas with the exceptions of physical education, music, and

art. There are currently four sections of kindergarten and five sections of first grade, two sections of second grade, three sections of fourth grade, and two sections of fifth grade. The average class size for kindergarten is 19.3 students, and the average class size for first grade is 17.7 students.

The parents and students of two half day sections of kindergarten and one section of first grade are the target groups for the study at this school. The reading program comes from Houghton Mifflin, combined with teacher developed thematic units. The math program comes from the University of Chicago Math Program adopted by the district. It is a hands-on, higher level thinking program. Additional skills are supplemented by the teacher.

## The Surrounding Community

### Site 1

The village where the students reside is a mature, upscale community. It is located about 30 minutes from downtown Chicago in the location close to Illinois 53, the Eisenhower Expressway (I-290), and the Northwest Tollway (I-90). Passenger rail service is provided for an average daily of 6,000 people by Metra's Chicago and Northwestern

train to Chicago from two train stations. Residents have convenient access to O'Hare International Airport and Palwaukee Airport. Pace buses provide transportation to regional shopping malls.

The Park District is a national Gold Medal Award winner for excellence in its facilities and programming for its residents. Forest preserves nearby provide access for many outdoor recreational activities. The village is also home to world-class thoroughbred racing at a well known International Racecourse. The Memorial Library, ranking second in the state of Illinois in total circulation only to the Chicago Public Library, provides quality programs and services to the area schools and community.

The community experienced rapid growth in the 1980's, but has seen that growth level off during the 1990's. The village has focused on redevelopment of the downtown business district as it welcomes its residents to come and raise their families in a reputable, desired place to live. This town is served by several elementary school districts, with the targeted district covering the central area of the village. Some issues that the community are dealing with coincide with how the students are being taught in the school system. Many parents from various elementary schools have held private meetings among

themselves to discuss and support the "Back to Basics" idea and philosophy of teaching. In a district where multi-age classrooms are seen frequently, there are two parent forces struggling against one another. Many parents see the benefit of multi-age teaching, where the "Back to Basics" parents are not in support of this type of teaching.

## The Surrounding Community

### Site 2

The students reside in a northwest suburb of a Midwestern city. This community is divided into four separate elementary and junior high districts. The district is overseen by a local school board and a Superintendent. Within the district, there are two elementary schools and one junior high. The junior high students will attend the same high school.

This community has 20,948 housing units with 66.9% owner occupied, 29.9% renter occupied, and 3.2% vacant. The median value of a single family home is $155,100. The median rent is $564 (U.S. Census, 1990). There are also various retail and corporate establishments, including Randhurst Shopping Center, RecPlex, Lake Center Corporate Park, Kensington Center for Business, and scattered commercial sites (Living In, 1994).

There are 53,168 people residing in the community. The major racial ethnic groupings include: White (90.3%), Black (1.1%), American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut (0.1%), Asian/Pacific Islander (6.4%), and other races (2.1%). The Hispanic population which is already included in the figures above, is 6.4% (U.S. census 1990). The median income is $61,084 (Living In, 1994).

The community supports the district in various ways. The passing of the referendum in March of 1994, allowed for the building of two new schools, is the greatest example of their support. Other supportive actions include the planting of 10,000 daffodils by the corporations, families, and schools in the downtown area, and the community contributions to the school's annual fifth grade space simulation project.

## National Context of the Problem

Students' low motivation and parents' lack of knowledge about how to help reinforce skills, appears to be a problem nationally. The majority of teachers are constantly searching for effective strategies to address these issues. There are many factors that influence achievement and motivation. Some of these factors include: teaching styles,



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student self- esteem, background experiences, school climate, and along with parental involvement.

Teaching styles can have a positive effect on students' attitudes and motivation toward school and learning. Styles can differ in terms of pacing and format of instruction, student involvement in the lessons, emphasis on achievement, and motivation (Phillips, 1996). Varying methods of instruction can be a crucial factor in determining a student's academic success and motivation in the classroom. Cooperative learning, cross age tutoring, and skill oriented instruction have been documented as being able to positively enhance student self esteem and attitudes (Atkinson, 1995).

Students bring characteristics to the learning situation that vary tremendously. They differ in abilities, aptitudes, confidence, degree of self- esteem, and background experiences (St. Clair, 1987). Students with low self- esteem have lower peer acceptance, lower feelings of self -worth, and more negative perceptions regarding social acceptance. These factors have a direct impact on school achievement (LaGreca and Stone, 1990).

There are also significant differences between high achieving and less successful students. Some differences include: family background, interactions with parents, self

motivation, and interest in school activities. Teachers take these differences into account as they try to bridge the gap between high achieving and low achieving students. A positive school climate is an essential component to help create a more stable and successful learning environment (Mostinger, 1993). Equally important is family interaction. Parental involvement in the educational process is a factor that can raise academic achievement, increase student motivation, sense of self adequacy, and self worth (Reed, 1994).

Problems such as low self esteem and motivation that start early in a student's schooling impact them in later years. As students become less motivated, their achievement tends to decrease as well. This may put a student at greater risk for academic failure. (Reed, 1994) These reasons underscore why teachers are constantly searching for effective strategies or methods to increase motivation and self worth.



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# CHAPTER 2

# PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

## Problem Evidence

In order to document the existence of the weakened home-to-school, school-to-home relationship, and lack of student motivation among the parents and students in the targeted schools, it is important to first determine the key factors that effect a child's motivation at home. Teacher perceptions were surveyed, parental viewpoints were considered, and students' interests were polled.

Twenty teachers were surveyed in the beginning of the school year. The survey was designed for teachers to express opinions regarding factors that contribute to low academic

achievement, lack of motivation and what teachers do to help assist the parents reinforce their child's education at home. The survey was developed by the researchers (Appendix E ), to assist in the analysis process. Seventy-one factors relating to students' low academic achievement were gained from the survey. Fifty-nine factors relating to students' low motivation were gained from the survey as well. These factors were grouped into four categories. A breakdown of the responses in each category is provided in graphs one and two.

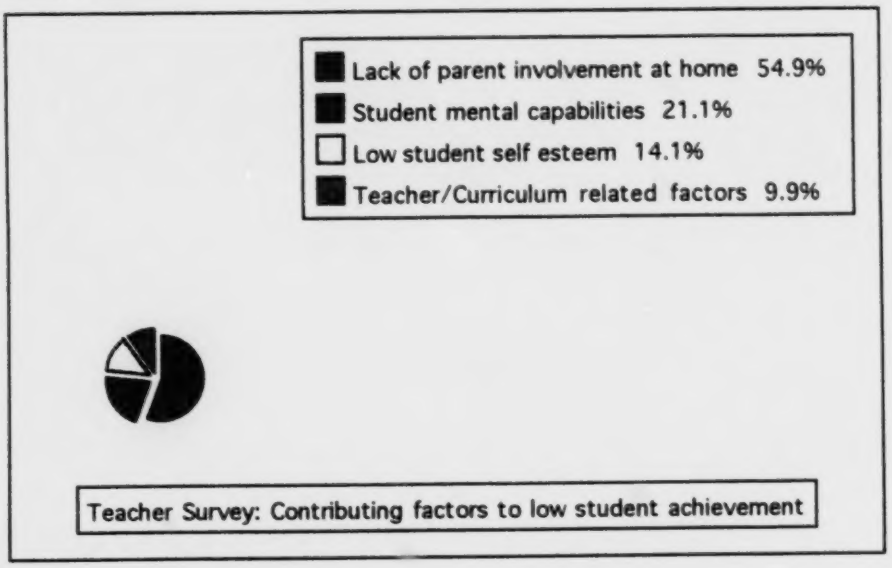
Lack of parent involvement at home 54.9%
Student mental capabilities 21.1%
Low student self esteem 14.1%
Teacher/Curriculum related factors 9.9%
Teacher Survey: Contributing factors to low student achievement

Figure 1
What do you feel contributes to student low academic achievement?

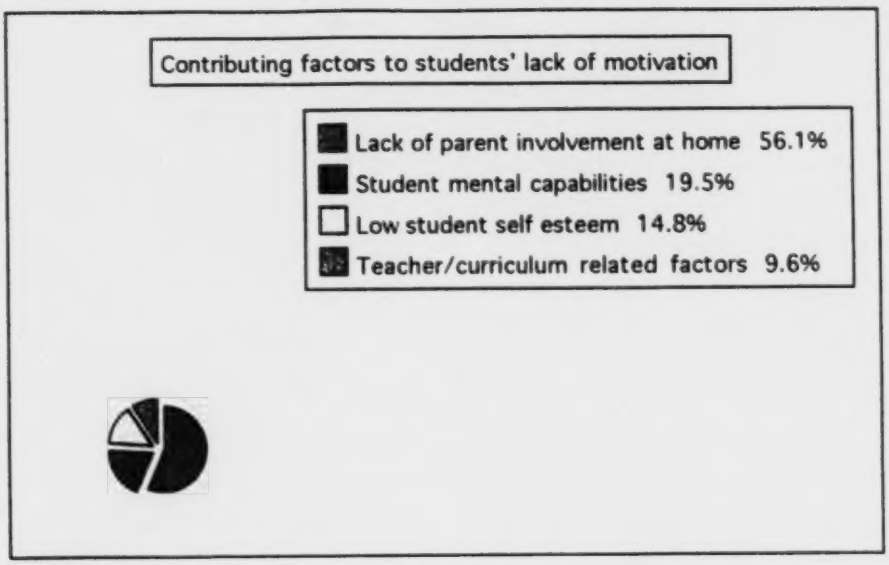
Contributing factors to students' lack of motivation
Lack of parent involvement at home 56.1%
Student mental capabilities 19.5%
Low student self esteem 14.8%
Teacher/curriculum related factors 9.6%

**Figure 2**
**What do you feel contributes to students' lack of motivation?**

Figure 1 suggests that teachers overwhelmingly feel that the lack of parental support or involvement at home has a direct impact on their child's academic growth and achievement. According to the opinions of the professional staff, the attitudes and behaviors of the people most personally involved in the learning process, the children, the parents, and the teachers, have the greatest effect on the development and success of students. Survey responses indicate that parents are not spending quality time talking, reading, modeling, and playing games with their child. In general, teachers feel that parents do not always expose their child to a variety of experiences that will enrich and

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reinforce their child's academic skills.

Figure 2 also implies that lack of parent support or involvement at home greatly affects student motivation. The professional staff expressed many ways that parents affect their child's motivation towards school. In addition to reviewing homework and skills learned, key issues revolved around the amount of time parents spend interacting and talking with their child. Children also need to view their parents as motivated role models. Teachers felt that parents need to convey a more enthusiastic message to their children about school and learning. Accomplishments need to be reinforced and students need to be taught how to learn from their mistakes. This modeling is crucial and is not always evident in the home.

Based on the fact that parents are the single most important influence in a child's life, the researchers felt it was appropriate to survey the parents in the classes of the targeted schools. Of the 86 parent surveys sent out, 68 were returned. The purpose of this survey was to obtain a general picture of how parents view the ways their child spends their free time at home. Parents were asked a variety of questions relating to ways they interact with their child, as well as what they feel their child's interests are. There was a

wealth of data collected from the surveys. The researchers chose to focus on two areas of the survey. The first area reflected, often, sometimes, or rarely parental answers to the following questions: Do you read to your child? Do you go to the library with your child? Does your child watch more than 2.5 hours of television each day? This data is reflected in Graphs 3a, 4a, and 5a.

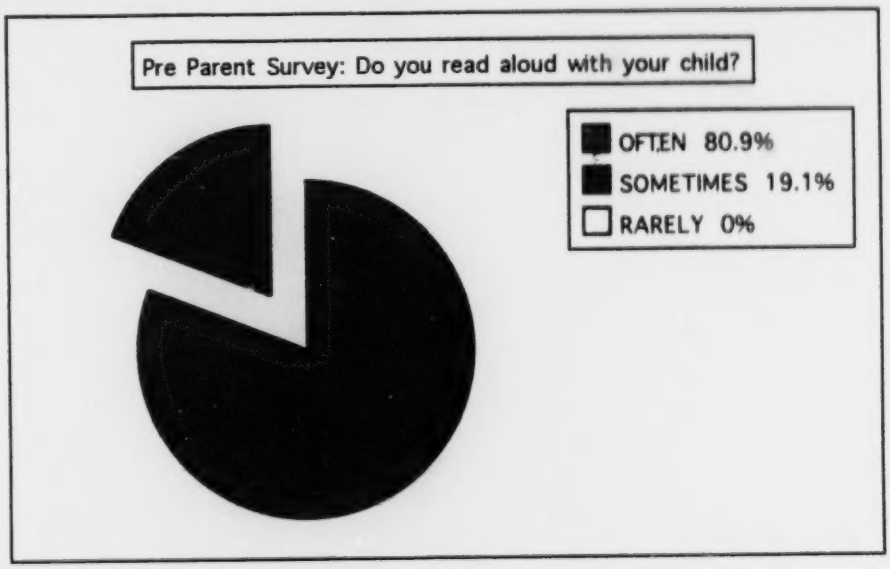


Figure 3a
Do you read aloud with your child?

The results to this question were positive and reassuring to the researchers. According to the data, parents from the targeted school often read aloud with their child. However, some parents indicated that they read aloud with their child on a less frequent

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basis. Because reading aloud helps to: promote a rich vocabulary, increase comprehension, provide background knowledge, and build self confidence, to name a few. The researchers have concerns for those students who are not read aloud to on a consistent basis. For children to be successful in reading, shared reading time between parents and children and an appropriate model must be present in the home.

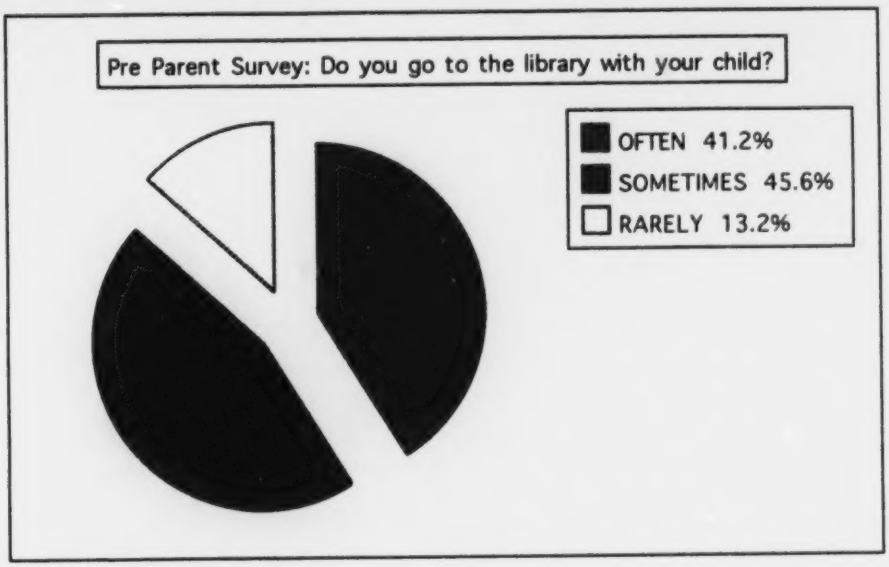


Figure 4a
Do you go to the library with your child?

Based on the data collected, the researchers conclude that most families are going to the library with their child. However, when taking into consideration responses in the "Sometimes" and "Rarely" categories, there are many families that do not realize the

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importance of using library resources. The library provides an additional way for parents to interact with their child, show enthusiasm towards reading, and to make use of library programs, computers, and other resources that may not be available at home.

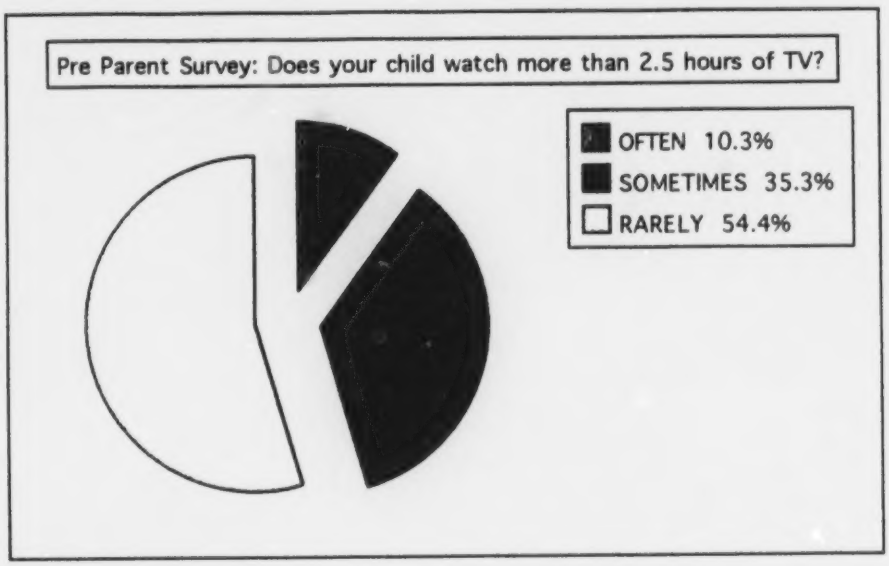


Figure 5a
Does your child watch more than 2.5 hours of television per day?

Of the 68 surveys returned, 7 parents indicated that their child often watched more than 2.5 hours of television a day. Twenty-four indicated that their child sometimes watched more than 2.5 hours of T.V. a day, while 37 responded that this rarely occurred. The researchers felt that it was positive to find 37 parents responding that this rarely occurred. However, concerns remain for the students who fall in the "sometimes" and

"often" categories. The amount of time these students spend watching television appears to be excessive based upon the amount of time a child is at home during the day. As more time is spent with television, children begin to value it rather than participate in activities more beneficial to the development and reinforcement of learning.

The second area of the survey the researchers focused on asked parents to respond how often their child engaged in 20 designated activities during their free time at home. Parents again responded, often, sometimes, or rarely. Figures 6a and 7a show parents' views of their child's at home free choice activities.

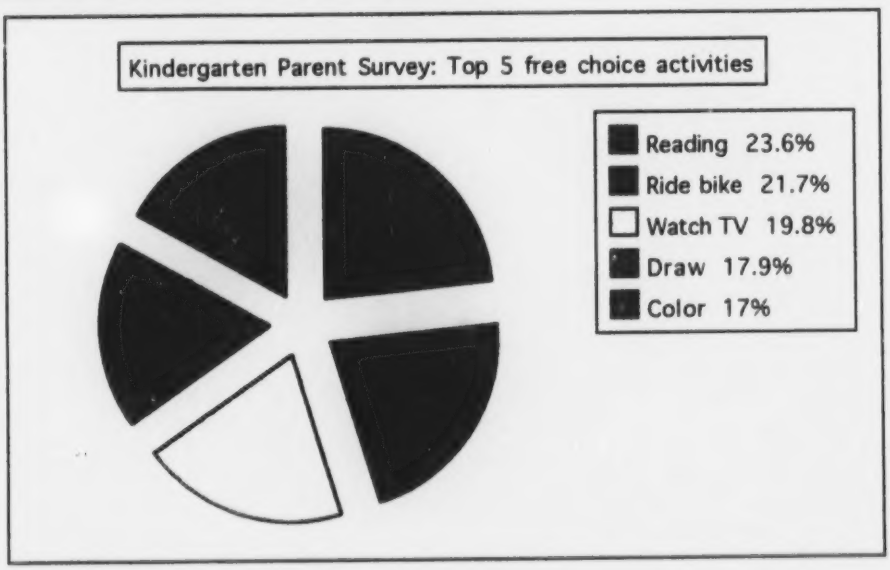


Figure 6a
Parent Kindergarten Survey: Top five activities

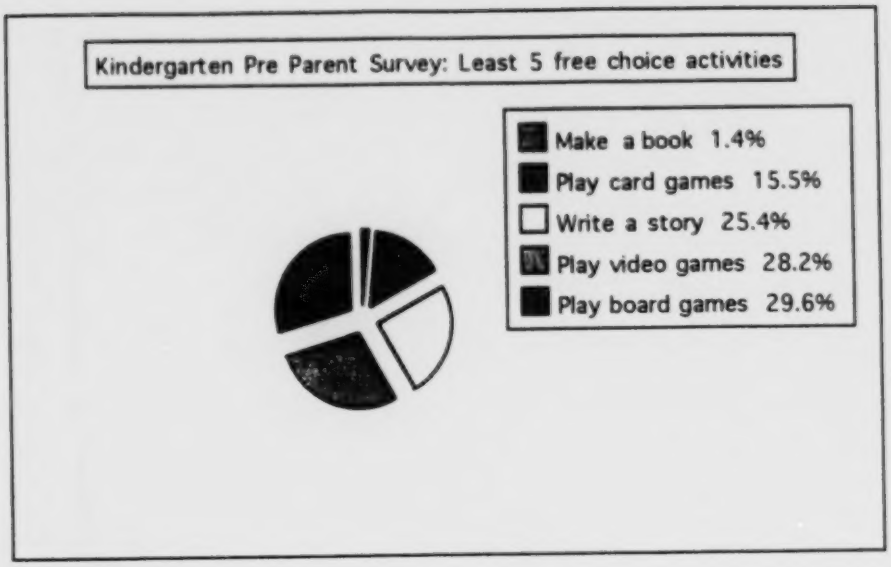
Kindergarten Pre Parent Survey: Least 5 free choice activities
Make a book 1.4%
Play card games 15.5%
Write a story 25.4%
Play video games 28.2%
Play board games 29.6%

Figure 7a
Parent Kindergarten Survey: Least five activities

Kindergarten parents' responses indicate that the favorite free choice activity for their children is reading. Although reading is very beneficial for reinforcing academics, the researchers would like to see additional educational related activities in the top five as well. The researchers noted that the least chosen activities included the following educational related activities: making a book, writing, playing card games and board games.

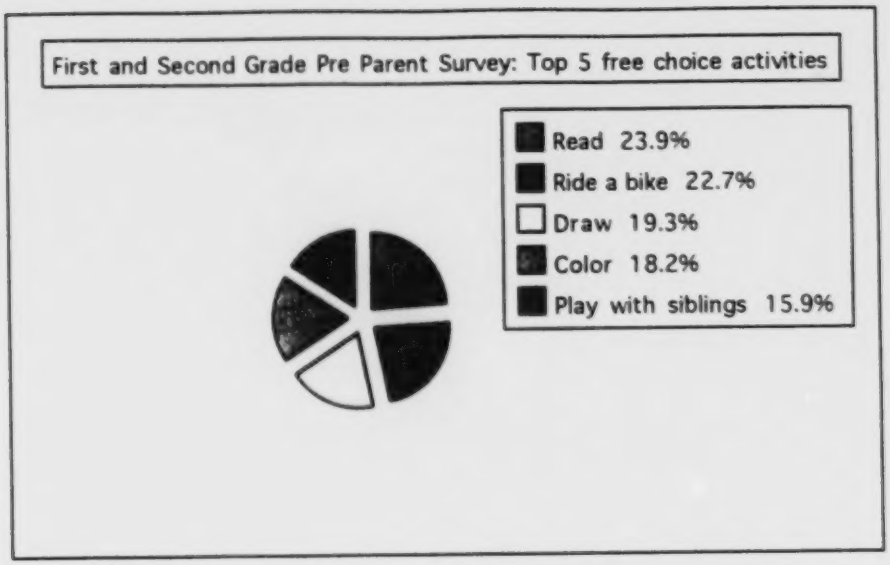
First and Second Grade Pre Parent Survey: Top 5 free choice activities
Read 23.9%
Ride a bike 22.7%
Draw 19.3%
Color 18.2%
Play with siblings 15.9%

**Figure 8a**

**Parent First and Second Grade Survey: Top five activities**

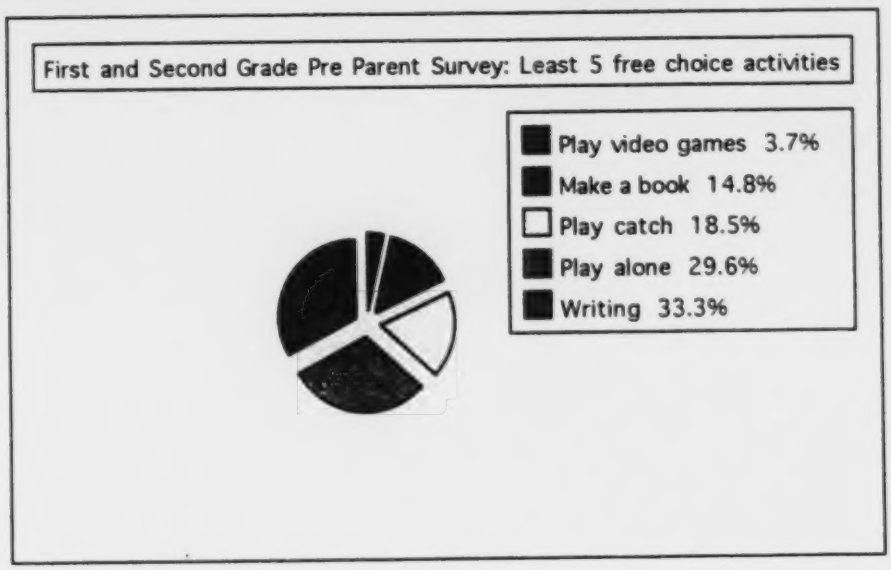
First and Second Grade Pre Parent Survey: Least 5 free choice activities
Play video games 3.7%
Make a book 14.8%
Play catch 18.5%
Play alone 29.6%
Writing 33.3%

**Figure 9a**

**Parent First and Second Grade Survey: Least five activities**

First and second grade at home activities were analyzed together. Similar to the kindergarten responses, first and second grade parents also felt that reading was their child's favorite free choice activity. Making a book and writing were among the five least chosen activities. Other academic related activities also rank low according to survey responses. Researchers feel that more time needs to be spent with activities that reinforce and apply skills learned at school. It is crucial for parents to model appropriate choices and ways for children to spend their free choice time.

In order to further investigate the probable causes of low student motivation, the researchers felt it very important to interview the students themselves. Thirty-nine kindergarten students were surveyed. Twenty-one first grade and second grade students were surveyed. The students were asked how much they enjoy doing 20 specific activities at home. Students responded : "I like it a lot!", "I like it a little.", "I don't like it, Yuk!". These results were analyzed to help provide a picture of what students enjoy doing at home. Figures 10a and 11a reflect results of kindergarten student interest surveys. Figures 12a and 13a reflect results of first grade student interest surveys. Figures 14a and 15a reflect results of second grade interest surveys.

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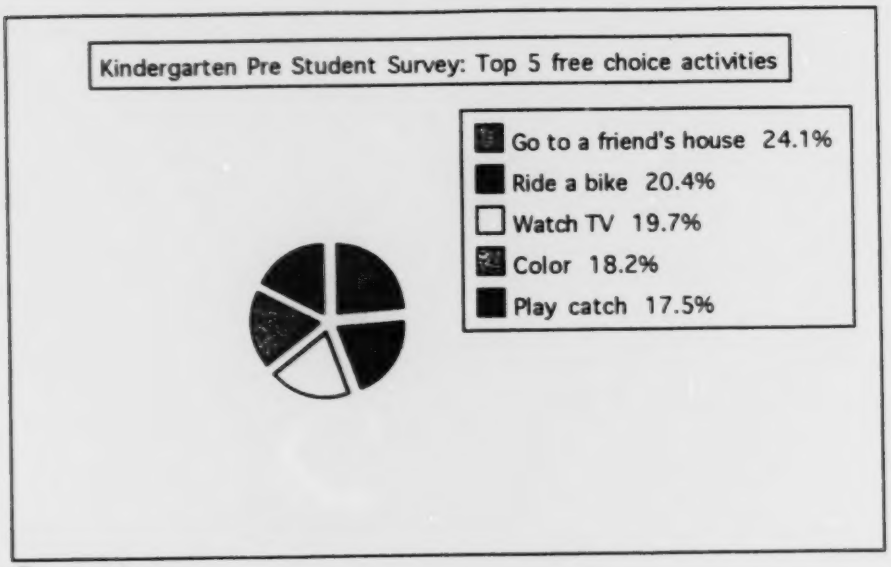
Kindergarten Pre Student Survey: Top 5 free choice activities
Go to a friend's house 24.1%
Ride a bike 20.4%
Watch TV 19.7%
Color 18.2%
Play catch 17.5%

Figure 10a

Student Kindergarten Survey: Top five activities

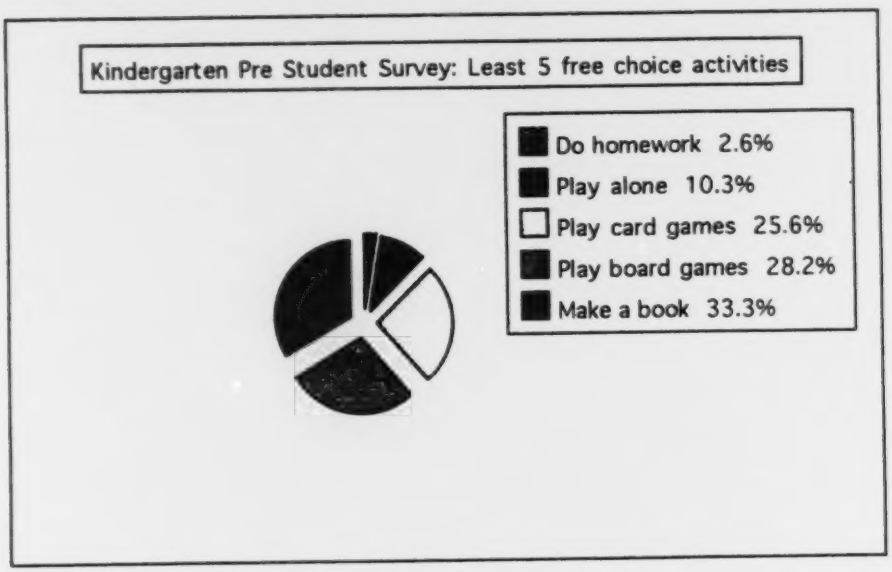
Kindergarten Pre Student Survey: Least 5 free choice activities
Do homework 2.6%
Play alone 10.3%
Play card games 25.6%
Play board games 28.2%
Make a book 33.3%

Figure 11a

Student Kindergarten Survey: Least five activities

The top five free choice activities at home of kindergartners were not as academically related as the researchers had hoped. Coloring was fourth on the list. Watching television was very high on the list. However, many educational related choices comprised the five least favorite activities. Researchers note that even though these students are young, they could be spending more of their free time with activities that strengthen and reinforce early academic skills.

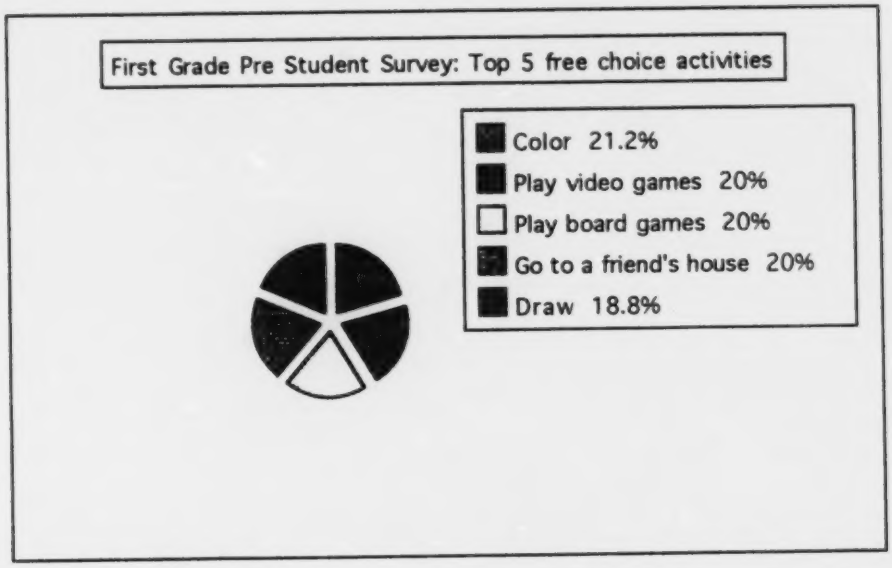
First Grade Pre Student Survey: Top 5 free choice activities
Color 21.2%
Play video games 20%
Play board games 20%
Go to a friend's house 20%
Draw 18.8%

Figure 12a
Student First Grade Survey: Top five activities

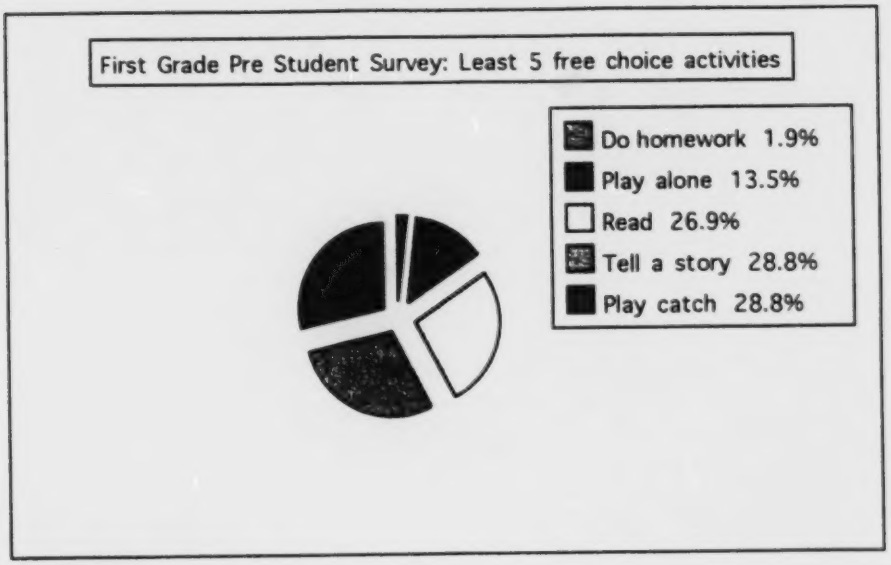
First Grade Pre Student Survey: Least 5 free choice activities
Do homework 1.9%
Play alone 13.5%
Read 26.9%
Tell a story 28.8%
Play catch 28.8%

Figure 13a
Student First Grade Survey: Least five activities

First grade top five activities show a little more interest in academic related free choice time. Playing video games was very high on their list of things to do. Coloring, drawing, and playing board games were among the top five chosen. Reading, telling a story, and homework were very much disliked. Researchers would like to see children using their free choice time in ways that have greater opportunities to reinforce and practice skills learned at school.

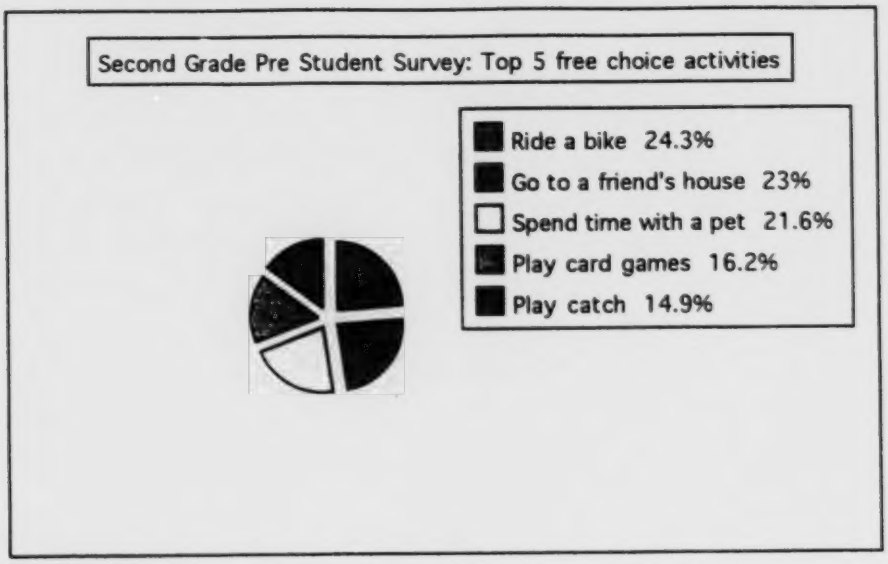
Second Grade Pre Student Survey: Top 5 free choice activities
Ride a bike 24.3%
Go to a friend's house 23%
Spend time with a pet 21.6%
Play card games 16.2%
Play catch 14.9%

Figure 14a

Student Second Grade Survey: Top five activities

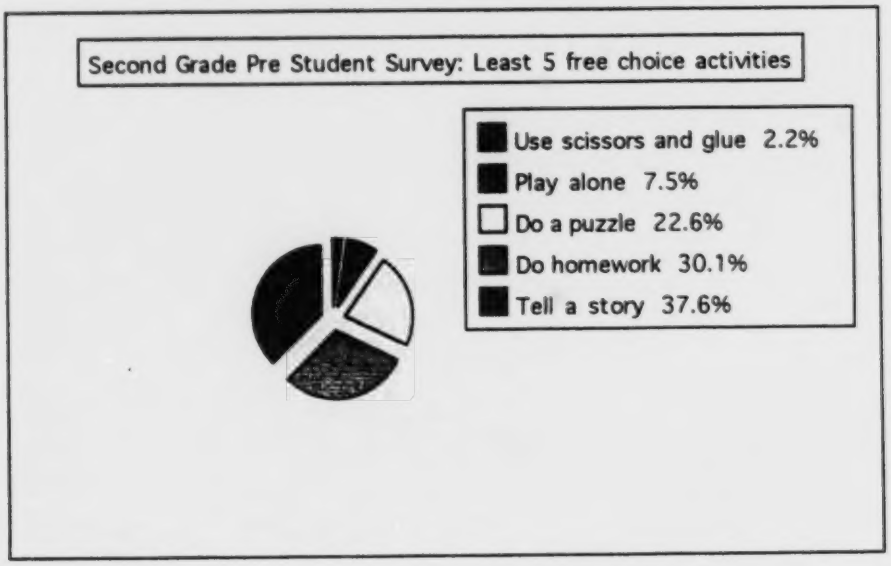
Second Grade Pre Student Survey: Least 5 free choice activities
Use scissors and glue 2.2%
Play alone 7.5%
Do a puzzle 22.6%
Do homework 30.1%
Tell a story 37.6%

Figure 15a

Student Second Grade Survey: Least five activities

Second grade results show that, other than card games, researchers feel that there are no other academic related activities being chosen at home. These findings are based upon the top five at home free choice list. Homework and telling stories were the two least favorites.

Professional literature also suggests that the probable causes of students' lack of motivation may be affected by the actions, behaviors and/ or attitudes of the people most closely involved with the child's academic environment. Two major groups that stand out are the parents and teachers.

The parents and the environment they create at home play a vital role in the development of children's learning. Each child comes to school with unique background experiences. Children that have a wealth of experiences such as being read to, communicated with, exposed to cultural arts, museums, etc. are more likely to succeed and be highly motivated. These children's previous environments have favored the development of academic and social skills. Parents have almost always been the key factor in this development. Most things parents can do to foster an environment that encourages reading and writing involves time, attention, and sensitivity (Mavrogenes, 1990).

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Parents are viewed as valuable partners in educating children. Research confirms teachers' experiences that parental involvement in childrens' education is a key factor in childrens' academic success (Rich,1985). The amount of time a student spends in the classroom is relatively short. Students are only in class for "13% of the student's waking hours in the first 18 years of life."(Walberg, Paschal, and Weinstein, 1985) Clearly, this shows how critical parents are in bridging the transition of learning from school- to- home and home- to- school.

Parents and teachers have a weakened home-to-school and school-to-home relationship. Stiller and Ryan's findings (1992) indicate that teacher and parent involvement were primary predictors of academic achievement. When this relationship is weakened, parents do not always know what and how their children are learning in school. This results in parents not always having the current strategies and background knowledge to reinforce their child's skills, in motivating and developmentally appropriate ways. Parental involvement in the educational process is a factor that can raise academic achievement, increase student motivation, sense of self, adequacy and self worth (Reed, 1994).

Most parents want to be more supportive, yet they do not often know how to get involved. Some believe that they need advice from educators before they can help their children to succeed in school. (Weinstein, 1983). Another factor could be the confidence level of the parent. Parents don't always feel competent with school work, and may not understand how they can contribute to the learning environment. Parents may have had previous negative encounters from school either stemming from their own experiences or their child's. It is not easy for parents to overcome their idea that communication with the school is negative and usually about poor student performance. This may stand in the way of a positive and clearly communicated relationship between home and school (Mavrogenes, 1990).

Research indicates that most parents are willing to help their children with their education, but do not know how to go about it and are afraid of interfering. Parents feel they could better help their children if teachers would tell them what to do. Current thinking stresses that teachers and parents must make concrete and specific suggestions as to how parents can help their children at home (Beveridge and Jerrams, 1981). These suggestions may contain ideas that seem so obvious to educators and some parents that

they wonder why the ideas were even included. However, it is these obvious suggestions that are so important, yet often are neglected. Teachers and schools must make such suggestions come alive for parents by utilizing a variety of methods.

A study was constructed which evaluated teachers use of home to school communication using both teacher and parent perspectives. The outcomes indicated that when parents received frequent and effective communications, their overall evaluation of the teacher, sense of comfort with their school, and their reported level of involvement was higher (Ames, 1995).

Another study showed indications of active involvement in some school events. However, it identified the need for teachers to involve parents in ways that affect academic performance. This results in parents who are better informed and resourceful partners in their child's education (Morrison, 1993).

Parent involvement in education is one of the most promising movements to have come out of the school reforms of the 1980's (Carlson, 1991) Partnerships between teachers and parents provide many benefits for childrens education (Gelfer, 1991). When parents and teachers enhance communication, the students will benefit. The children will

become more motivated in and out of the school atmosphere. Children's motivation and attitudes are less positive when parents do not receive frequent communication from their teacher. This strongly suggests that the frequency and content of school- to- home communications are important. When the communications contain information that influence parents' perceptions of their child as a learner, and give the parents a sense of involvement and importance in their child's education, academic achievement and motivation may be enhanced ( Ames, 1995). Review of the literature leads the researchers to believe that high student achievement and motivation are closely related to positive parental participation in education. Parents and school need to work together so all children can succeed in school.



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# CHAPTER 3

# THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

## Literature Review

Research and a review of literature suggests that parents and teachers have a weakened home-to-school, school-to-home relationship. Teacher and parent involvement are primary predictors of academic achievement (Stiller and Ryan,1992). When this relationship is weakened, parents do not always know what and how their children are learning in school. This results in parents not always having the current strategies and background knowledge to reinforce their child's skills and motivation in developmentally appropriate ways. "Parental involvement in the educational process is a factor that can quickly raise academic achievement, increase student motivation, sense of self adequacy,

and self worth" (Reed, 1994).

In 1995 Ames constructed a study which evaluated teachers' use of home-to-school communication using both teacher and parent perspectives. The study indicated three outcomes that support the solution strategies. When frequent and effective communication strategies are in place, the parents' overall evaluation of the teacher is more positive, their sense of comfort with their school as a whole is stronger, and their reported level of involvement with their child's academic activities increased.

Many parents are always active in particular non-academic school events. However, teachers need to involve parents in ways that directly effect academic performance (Morrison, 1993). Teachers have a responsibility in helping parents become more involved with their child's education.

It is the teacher's job to educate the parents. This research study supports this by using interventions to increase the communication between home and school and create a variety of activities that parents may be involved in. The targeted outcome is that parents will become better informed and more resourceful partners in their child's education. Parent involvement in education is one of the most promising movements to have come out

of the School Reforms of the 1980's (Carlson, 1991). Partnerships between teachers and parents provide many benefits for childrens' education (Gelfer, 1991).

When parents and teachers enhance their communication, the students are the beneficiaries. The children will become more motivated in and out of the school atmosphere. Childrens' motivation and attitudes toward parent involvement were more positive when their parents received more frequent communication from their teacher (Ames, 1995).

The researchers predicted that children will choose to spend more time doing activities that reinforce important basic skills that are needed to be life long learners. Children will choose to spend less time with activities such as non-educational television programs and video games. Another hypothesis is that the targeted groups of children will spend more time with activities that are associated in the important areas of Reading, Writing, Math, and Science. The researchers also hope the interventions will assist students in developing and using appropriate social skills.

Although the parents and teachers play the main roles in the communication effort, the students are also actively involved in the communication process. The activities the

children choose in and out of the classroom, before and after the interventions are implemented, will be noted in this paper.

In order for students to be actively involved, the researchers have created many activities that the students will use in order to interact with their parents and enhance communication. These activities will be introduced to participants at the beginning of the academic year and monitored weekly and monthly. The frequency and content of school-to-home communications is important. When the communications contain information that influence parents' perceptions of their child as a learner and give the parents a sense of involvement and importance in their child's education, parent involvement will be enhanced (Ames, 1995).

A review of literature dealing with parent/teacher communication reveals that teachers need to use innovative strategies to involve parents. Constructing activities unique to a set of parents and students can address the negative attitudes of the community, and try to promote a more positive partnership philosophy (Reglin, 1992).

The researchers are using a model that will benefit the solution strategies. Heightened parent involvement may increase the possibility for the interventions to be

successful. Teacher supported activities increase parent confidence and encouraged them to risk trying other educational programs. The researchers believe that providing motivation and educational activities for students and parents to use together has great potential to turn students into life-long learners.

## Project Objectives and Processes

Strategies were designed to promote parent education and involvement the targeted kindergarten, first and second grade classes from September 1996 through February 1997. The students in these classes and their parents were presented with specific materials and activities which would reinforce skills and promote interest in learning.

The plan proposed that the results of increased parental involvement would help the student establish read-aloud routines, encourage the choice of educational free-time activities, encourage positive use of free time, and reinforce students' skills. These behaviors will be measured through participation in parent education "Make and Take" workshops, "Read to Succeed" activities, "TV-Free Activities", and "Activity Bags". Student and/or parental participation will be recorded.

Examples of process statements that reflect this thinking are as follows:

In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following processes are necessary:

Read to Succeed

1. Assemble an extensive library consisting of reading materials of various levels and genres.

2. Create a recording sheet that will show the title of the book, the author, who the child read with, signatures, and a rating of the book for the student to complete.

3. Display a chart in the classroom to record participation by use of stickers.

4. Collect prizes for a treasure box and have use of a book club.

5. For kindergarten, a monthly recording sheet will be created.

Take Home Activity Bags

1. Create and assemble individual bags of activities dealing with Math, Language, Reading, Writing, Science, Social Studies and Art.

2. Record participants on a checklist.

Pull the Plug: TV Free Activities

1. Create a sheet (slip) that allows the alternative activity to be recorded.



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2. Assemble an area or space for students to maintain the 'Pull the Plug" slips monthly.

3. Collect prizes for a monthly raffle.

4. Create a certificate to show monthly participation.

Parent Make and Take Workshops

1. Teachers plan three workshops between September and February for parents.

2. Plan format for workshops.

3. Provide a sign-in sheet for parents.

4. Gather materials needed for each workshop.

5. Supply raffle materials related to workshop subject.

## Project Action Plan

The following action plan was created and designed to implement a program that will increase parent education and involvement. This program has four major components which consist of a "Read to Succeed" program, "Activity Bags", "Pull the Plug" TV-Free Activities, and Parent "Make and Take" Workshops. The improvement sought as a result of the implementation plan is an increase in students' motivation as life-long learners and

reinforcement of skills.

The researcher will design and administer baseline surveys for the students in the targeted kindergarten, first, and second grade classrooms, their parents, and kindergarten first, and second grade teachers within both targeted elementary schools. There will be a pre-student survey (Appendix A), post-student survey (Appendix B), pre-parent survey (Appendix C), post-parent survey (Appendix D), and one initial teacher survey (Appendix E). The surveys were written during the summer of 1996. Student surveys are to be administered the fourth and twenty-third weeks of school, parent surveys the second and twenty-third weeks of school, and the teacher surveys prior to the beginning of school for students, during in-service days. The purpose of the baseline surveys are to compile data for probable cause.

The most extensive part of our action plan will address the four components of the parent education and involvement program. The researchers designed and acquired the materials to be utilized by the targeted students and their parents over the summer of 1996.

1. "Read to Succeed" is a parent-child reading activity program that will be implemented starting the second week of school. To introduce this program a letter (Appendix F) will be sent to the parents.

The kindergarten researcher will send home a monthly "Read to Succeed" Read Aloud Chart (Appendix G). Parents will record books read aloud during that month. Charts are returned to school at the end of the month. Any child who participates for that month receives a certificate of achievement (Appendix H). The teacher will record names of participating students and the number of books read on a checklist.

First and second grade researchers will send a book chosen from the classroom library home every night four times a week, Monday through Thursday. Books will be on a rotating schedule so each individual child will get to read a variety of book selections. The child chooses an adult family member to read the book with. Suggested ways to share the book are provided. When they are finished sharing the book they will complete a "Read to Succeed" recording sheet (Appendix G) on which they will write the title of the book, author, who the child read with, signatures, and a rating of the book for the student to

complete.

The purpose of the rewards and incentives involved with the program are to enhance motivation. The teachers will record participation on a chart through the use of stickers. If all four "Read to Succeed" recording sheets are turned in for the week, the student will receive a sticker for the chart. When a student reaches a short term goal of a total of five stickers they will be able to choose from a variety of prizes from the treasure box. A long term goal of a total of twenty-five stickers will make them eligible for a free book of their choice from a routinely used book club.

2. "Take Home Activity Bags" contain activities that reinforce important skills in the areas of Math, Language, Reading, Writing, Science, Social Studies, or Art. A letter (Appendix J) will be sent home the fifth week of school and the activities will begin. All students involved in this research study will take home an activity bag twice a month. The bag can be kept for a period of one week. Each bag will contain a list of the materials enclosed, suggestions for the activities (Appendix K), all materials needed, and a comment card (Appendix L) on which parents and child will be asked to rate the activity. The activities are prepared with the intent to encourage parent-child interaction and learning at

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home. As the students master skills, the learning activities will be changed to meet the needs of the students.

3. "Pull the Plug" TV-Free Activities challenge children to choose activities other than watching television or playing video games. The researchers have planned this program to decrease the time spent with non-educational activities and promote family interaction with activities such as reading, writing, drawing, talking, or playing games. This activity will begin the sixth week of school with a letter (Appendix M) sent home to the parents explaining the components . "Pull the Plug" sheets (Appendix N) will go home once a week on Fridays. The goal is to participate at least once a week. This challenge can be done as often as the child chooses. For those who choose to do more TV-Free Activities than one slip a week, additional sheets will be available in the classroom. The child will complete and return the sheet after choosing a TV-Free Activity. Each child will have a special place to store sheets until the end of the month. Each month all children who participate are entered into a monthly raffle for TV-Free prizes such as paints, markers, clay, word finds, and any other activity or materials that will promote TV-Free choices. Children who participate at least four times in a month earn a certificate (Appendix O). The teachers will

record individual student participation and the number of TV-Free activities for each month.

4. Parent "Make and Take" workshops are the last components of the action plan. This will consist of three parent workshops. The first "Make and Take" workshop will be held in October and will concentrate on the area of math. The second will be held in January and will focus on science. The third will be in February and focus on language arts. A flier will be sent out to advertise the workshop and another one to remind and help determine the number of participants (Appendix P). The workshop format (Appendix Q) will be the same for all three. The parents will sign in for the benefit of keeping track of who attends each workshop. The teacher will open with an icebreaker that eases tension among guests. Then some helpful hints will be shared on the specific topic. Last will be the actual "Make and Take" time during which parents experience hands-on activities. The purpose is to provide the parents with the background knowledge and strategies to reinforce their child's skills at home. To encourage participation, each workshop will have a raffle of workshop related materials.

## Methods of Assessment

A variety of methods will be used to assess the effects of the interventions. Change in attitudes and perceptions of students and parents will be measured by a survey taken once in September and again in February. The results will be compared. Student participation and parent involvement will be documented through rating scales gathered throughout all activities implemented. In addition, open-ended evaluations will be provided for parent "Make and Take" workshops. A cumulative parent survey (Appendix R) will be conducted in February to gather feedback on all interventions.

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# CHAPTER 4

# PROJECT RESULTS

## Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this action research project was to reinforce students' motivation. An increase of parent interaction at home was selected to affect the desired changes. Four interventions were implemented to increase these parent interactions: Read to Succeed, Activity Bags, and Parent Make and Take Workshops.

Read to Succeed was designed to establish and reinforce the daily routines of reading aloud. We also wanted to help parents in understanding the benefits of reading aloud, using strategies for discussing books, and reinforcing their child's reading skills. At the kindergarten level, it consisted of a monthly read aloud program. The first and second grade levels consisted of sending home books with every student Monday through Thursday

on a weekly basis.

Activity Bags were designed to help foster parent-child interactions as well as reinforce social and academic skills. Another goal of the activity bags was to have a positive impact on the student's use of free time at home. Activity Bags included all areas of the curriculum. There were a variety of activities within each bag. Bags were rotated every other week. Students kept the bag for one week. Researchers made a conscious effort to ensure that Activity Bags were practical for both teachers and parents, as well as the children. All materials were provided, activities selected were not overly time consuming, clear and specific directions were given, and materials were durable. This activity was implemented at the kindergarten and first grade level for the full time of the action research project. Due to the curriculum expectations and homework levels at the second grade level, activity bags were experimented with, but not implemented for the full time. This was a deviation from the original action plan.

Pull the Plug, TV Free Activities, was designed to encourage children to choose activities other than watching television or playing video games. We hoped this area would help promote more family interaction, and more time spent with educational activities. This

was conducted with second grade students only. Upon implementation of Read to Succeed, Activity Bags, and Parent Make and Take Workshops, kindergarten and first grade realized it would be overwhelming to also implement Pull the Plug. This was deviation from the original action plan.

Parent Make and Take Workshops were designed to provide information strategies and helpful hints. The workshop provided parents with make and take activities they could use immediately with their child.

Great thought went into the format of each workshop. The researchers felt an informal relaxed atmosphere would be the best environment. Ways to keep the workshop informal included the use of an icebreaker at the beginning to help lighten the mood and to get parents talking with one another. The researchers strongly felt the need to have a balance between talking/lecture and hands-on activities. Prizes and refreshments also helped maintain a friendly atmosphere. An evaluation sheet was given to participants in order to provide feedback on the workshop.

Due to overwhelming amounts of time needed to develop and prepare for parent Make and Take Workshops, only two were held at each grade level. Math and reading were

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conducted at the kindergarten and first grade levels. Math and science were conducted at the second grade level. This was a deviation from the original plan of the Make and Take parent activities.

Read to Succeed

Based upon teacher reflection and feedback gained from a teacher's survey, the researchers believe that Read to Succeed was extremely successful. Kindergarten parents felt it was a motivational experience. They noted that it helped increase the amount they read with their children. Three parents stated this program helped reading aloud with their child become a daily habit, where it had not been before. The researcher was surprised at the number of people who responded that read aloud charts were a factor that increased motivation. In general parents felt the read aloud charts were a visual reminder to read aloud. The charts also helped make them aware of how much or how little they read with their child. One parent thought she was reading a lot with her child, when in reality at the end of the month she had only read 10 books. A few parents had inquired about obtaining charts for the upcoming summer months. They felt this would be a way to continue good reading habits even when school is not in session. Children enjoyed watching their read

aloud charts fill up each month. Parents also felt their child's interest in reading, academic growth, and vocabulary increased as well. Other motivating factors parents highlighted were award certificates and small prizes. Some kindergarten parents felt that Read to Succeed was not a motivational experience for their child. They felt reading aloud with their child was something they would do anyway and they didn't want paperwork attached to the task.

First and second grade parents enjoyed participating in Read to Succeed. A majority of parents felt it was a motivational reading experience for their children. They noticed improvement in their child's reading ability on a daily basis and felt that Read to Succeed helped the children take reading a step further by discussing the book, its characters, and contents. One comment stated that the more their child reads, the more she learns. Parents also commented that Read to Succeed helped raise their child's confidence, and reinforced the good habits of reading everyday. Another comment shared that when they stressed the importance of reading and schoolwork, their child realized the importance as well. This underscores the value of the home-to-school partnership. Two parents noted that Read to Succeed was not motivational for their child. They felt it was a chore that they had to push the child to complete. Another parent felt that there should be a way to have

less paperwork to out and keep track of. A few Second grade parents questioned the reading level at which these books were assigned. With further explanation, they realized that it was the oral reading that was important to focus on, as well as the communication that was happening between the parent and the child.

Activity Bags

Based upon teacher reflection, and feedback gained from a parent survey, the researchers believe that activity bags are a successful tool in meeting project goals. The majority of feedback received from parents regarding the activity bags was positive. Many parents felt that activity bags were beneficial because they helped to increase time spent together as a family. They felt that the activities were fun and the children looked forward to doing them. Parents also liked that the activities reinforced skills learned at school. They noted that their children were learning without realizing it, while having fun. Parents had positive comments on the variety of activities and materials.

Six people replied that activity bags were not helpful. All six of these comments were relating to the issue of busy schedules and lack of time. One parent stated that after a long day of work, then cooking, and dishes, there is only a half an hour to spend with her

child before bedtime. This is an important piece of information for educators to work with. The researchers speculate that a decrease in the amount of time available to spend at home could possibly be related to the number of households in which both parents are working, or an increase of single parent households. Although the researchers made every effort to provide enough time for parents and children to interact with the activity bags, it is noted that a lack of time is an issue that is a reality for some families. Researchers also felt that the amount of people in favor of activity bags and the positive comments, far outweighed any negative comments received. The design and format of the activity bags seemed to help make them successful. The length of time available to work with the bag at home, variety of activities and academic areas, clear directions, and providing all of the materials necessary, helped make it possible for more people to participate. The researchers noted that the children looked forward to getting new activity bags, but in contrast did not look forward to getting "homework". Activity bags were a fun way to have children reinforce academic areas and have fun at the same time. In actuality, this was a positive form of homework. Activity bags provided a link to parents that helped them understand school activities and have the ability to extend and reinforce learning at home.

Pull the Plug: TV Free Activities

Based upon teacher reflection and parent input from surveys, researchers felt that the Pull the Plug was a successful program that made parents aware of how much their child spends watching television. This activity allowed not only increased parent interaction with their child, but whole family as well. Children were able to independently keep track of time they spent away from television or video games. This documentation was above and beyond what the researchers had hoped for. The Pull the Plug documentation slips were kept in a central location and available for students as they needed them. With the expectation that students would spend 30 minutes per week doing an activity that was educational or family involved, the turnout was incredible. Each child was filling out documentation sheets at least once a day, which showed they were pulling the plug from the television at least 30 minutes per day. Some went beyond even this, and were filling out two or three slips a day. (By teacher observation and discussion with the children, they concluded that the children were more conscious of their television watching.) One parent commented that television was not an automatic first choice



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anymore. Another parent explained that their child had discovered how much fun other activities could be, and that activity that generates feedback is much more pleasurable. This parent said that Pull the Plug was definitely the contributing factor for these realizations. Yet another parent enthusiastically explained that her daughter approached her more often to play a game or just do "something together". She noted that it doesn't matter what they do, as long as they are having fun together. The researchers found this to be a priceless quote that supports our intentions, "I think Pull the Plug gave her back the power of choice.... I hope she continues on this path!".

Parent Make and Take Workshops

Based upon teacher reflection, and feedback from parents, the researchers believe that parent Make and Take Workshops were beneficial for teachers, parents, and children. The workshops were well attended and an overwhelming amount of positive feedback was generated from the evaluation sheets completed from that workshop as well as feedback from a middle of the year survey.

Parents expressed an appreciation of time and effort shown by the teachers. Parents also felt that it was beneficial to meet and talk with other parents in same grade

level. They enjoyed the make and take activities and were excited to take home new games that were fun to play with their children. Many parents felt the workshops were useful because it helped them understand what their children were learning about in school and how information was being taught. They enjoyed handouts that provided helpful hints, strategies, and ideas to use at home with their child. Parents commented that workshops helped give them the background which enabled them to reinforce concepts taught at school. They noted that workshops gave them new ideas for teaching and reinforcing skills that were still fun. Parents also expressed a desire to have more parent workshops held in the future.

Overall, it was felt that workshops help to enhance home-to-school communication, and family interaction at home. Also, with changes in teaching styles, many parents only know how to reinforce their child's learning through skill and drill. The workshops helped parents to experience how skills are being taught and to give them a few ideas and activities to take home and do as well. In summary, the parents enjoyed the workshops and had fun. In addition, the workshops and their contents helped parents to reinforce their child's skills at home in a fun, and developmentally appropriate way the entire family could

enjoy. It is felt by researchers that parent workshops help strengthen the home-to-school partnership.

## Presentation and Analysis of Results

A post parent survey was sent out in order to obtain a picture of how parents view their child's use of free time at home. Results were analyzed to determine if there were any changes in activities after participating in research interventions.

Of the 86 parent surveys that were sent out, 67 were returned. As in the pre-survey, again Often, Sometimes, or Rarely was asked to answer the following questions: 1. Do you read to your child? 2. Do you go to the library with your child? 3. Does your child watch more than 2.5 hours of television each day? The results of our post-survey are reflected in figures 3b, 4b, and 5b. An analysis and comparison to the pre-survey results are as follows.

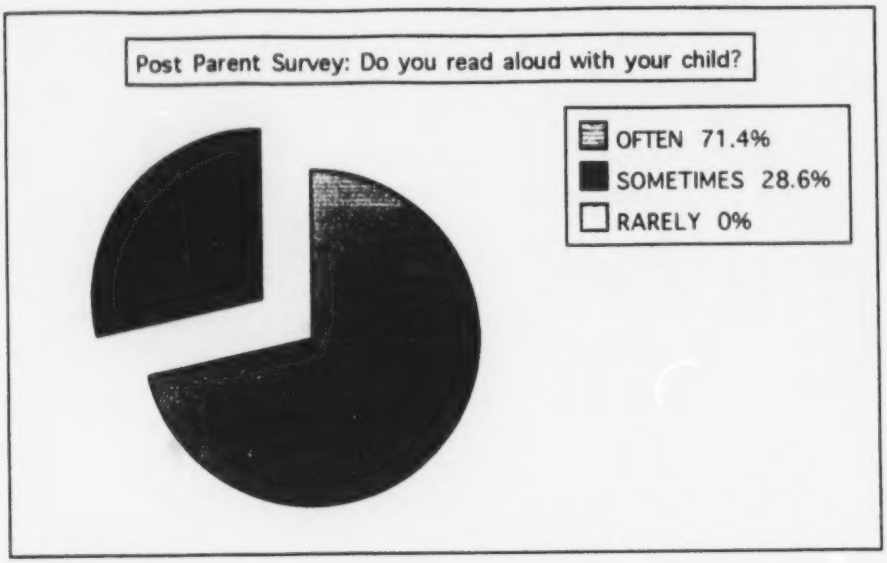


**Figure 3b**
**Do you read aloud with your child?**

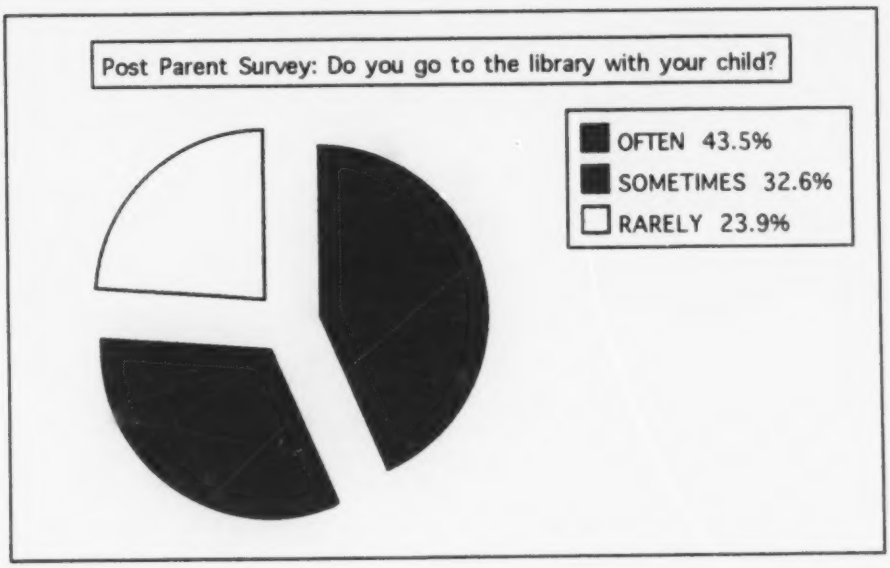


**Figure 4b**
**Do you go the library with your child?**

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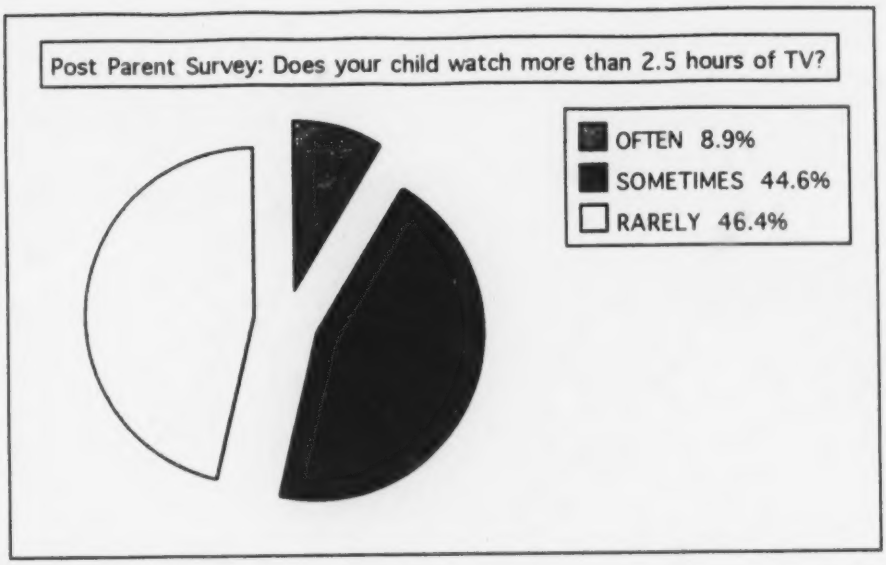


Figure 5b
Does your child watch more than 2.5 hours of TV?

The results of Figure 3b indicate a 9% decrease of parents who Often read aloud to their child from the pre-survey results showed in Figure 3a. Researchers feel that this decrease could partially be due to the increased independence of first and second grade readers. This shift could also be due to families that spend more time engaged in different activities. Another factor could be due to different participants. The parents completing the pre-survey may not be the same parents responding to the post-survey, which may not give us a true picture of the results.

The results of Figure 4b as compared to the pre-survey, increased for parents who Often go to the library with their child. The results also indicated a 10% increase in parents who are rarely going to the library with their child. Although the researchers do not feel their interventions had a impact on library visits, these results are important for educators. It is apparent that children are going to the library on a less frequent basis and educators must realize that it is important to help parents recognize the value of using library resources. Researchers feel that perhaps this could be an issue to address at a future parent workshop.

The results of Figure 5b as compared to the pre-survey, indicate that there is a slight decrease in the number of children who are Often watching more than 2.5 hours of television per day. However, there is almost a nine percent increase of the number of children who are Sometimes watching more than 2.5 hours per day. Researchers feel a small portion of this increase could be due to parents' heightened awareness of the amount of television that their child is watching, eliciting a more accurate response.

Although these results do not indicate the interventions as reducing television viewing, researchers obtained results from the cumulative survey comments, indicating that family interaction had increased as a result of Read to Succeed, Activity Bags, and Pull the Plug. The interventions must have had some impact on television viewing. Researchers feel that these results indicate a need for parents and teachers to help supply activities for children so they have choices other than watching television.

The second area of the survey focused on asking parents to respond how often their child engaged in 20 designated activities during their free time at home. Parents again responded Often, Sometimes, or Rarely. Results were analyzed to determine if there were any changes in free choice activities after participating in research interventions. Figure 6b and 7b reflect the post-survey results showing kindergarten parents' view of their child's top five and five least favorite free choice activities.

Post-survey results shown in Figure 6b when compared to pre-survey results, indicate that kindergarten parents feel the top five favorite free choice activities are reading, drawing, coloring, playing with siblings, and watching television. Even though television remains in the top five, reading, drawing, and coloring are academically related

activities. Playing with siblings shows an increase in positive family interactions. These results show a definite increase in academic related free choice activities.

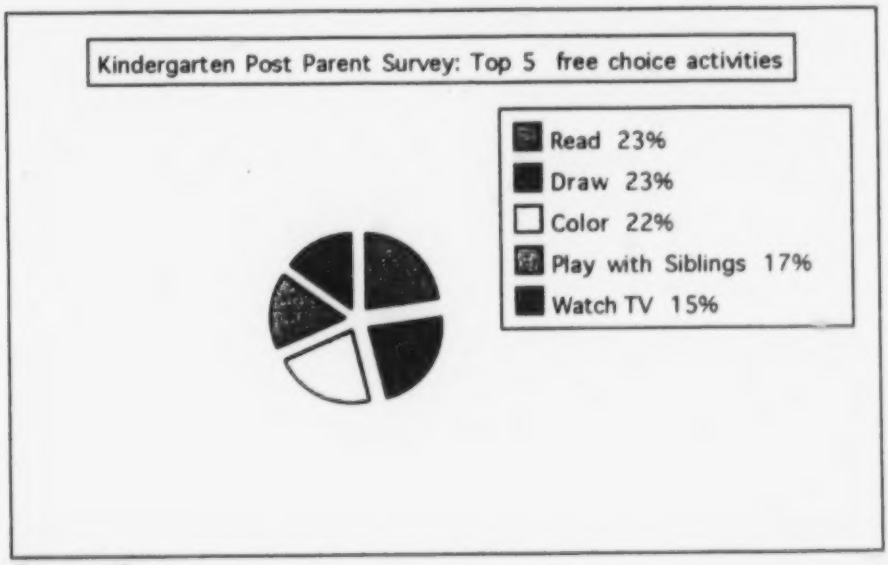


Figure 6b
Parent Kindergarten Survey: Top five activities

Results of Figure 7b indicate that video games appear to be played less often, and academic related choices like making books, and playing board games were chosen more frequently. Playing catch was chosen over playing video games, which supports the goal of family interaction, and choosing activities other than television.

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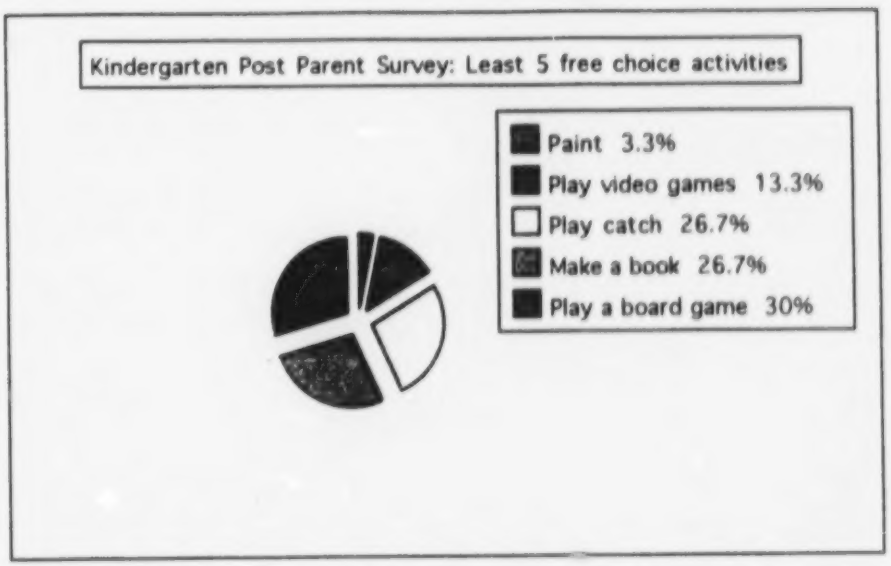
Kindergarten Post Parent Survey: Least 5 free choice activities
Paint 3.3%
Play video games 13.3%
Play catch 26.7%
Make a book 26.7%
Play a board game 30%

Figure 7b
Parent Kindergarten Survey: Least five activities

Researchers acknowledge that some of these changes can be attributed to the child's' school experience, maturation, and development. However, the researchers also feel that the interventions designed for this project, also had a direct impact on these results. These positive changes are an exciting accomplishment. Positive changes in behaviors were noted in a short amount of time. Researchers feel confident that if these activities were to continue consistently from kindergarten throughout the targeted grade

levels, parents would be more aware of their child's choice of activities at home and children would use their time more productively. This analysis is also relevant to Figures 8b and 9b, which show first and second grade results.

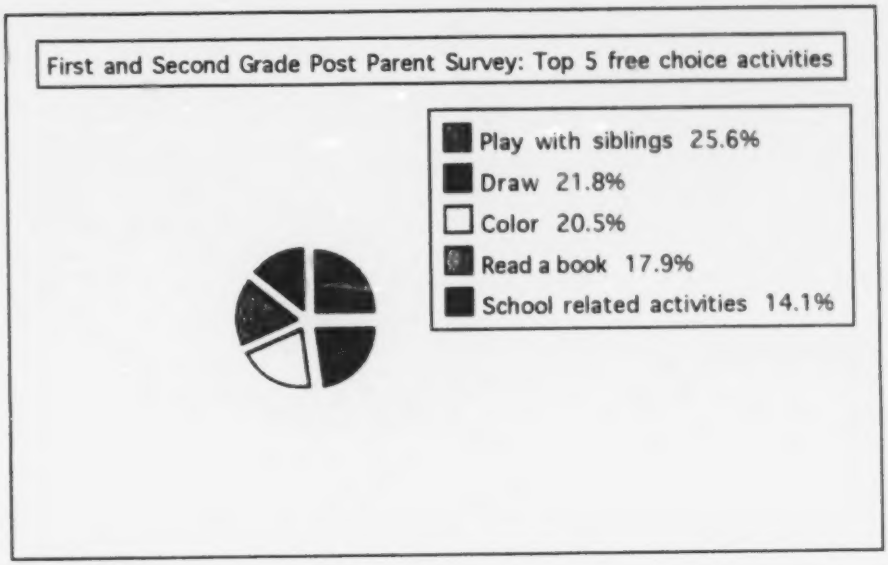
First and Second Grade Post Parent Survey: Top 5 free choice activities
Play with siblings 25.6%
Draw 21.8%
Color 20.5%
Read a book 17.9%
School related activities 14.1%

Figure 8b
Parent First and Second Grade Surveys: Top five activities

The results in Figure 8b indicate four academic related choices as being among the top five. The number one choice, playing with siblings, is also viewed as a positive choice because of the goal to increase family interaction at home. Researchers also felt that any activity chosen over television is a step in the right direction.

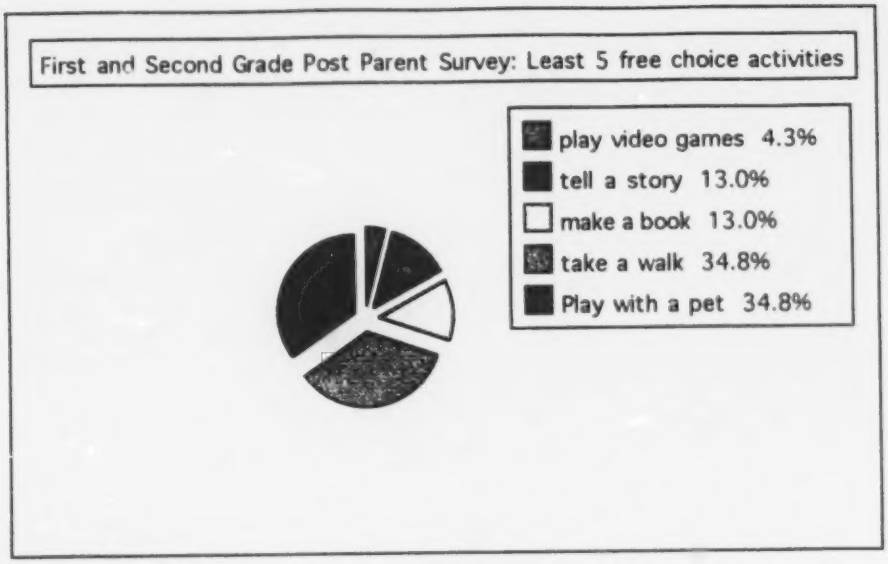
First and Second Grade Post Parent Survey: Least 5 free choice activities
play video games 4.3%
tell a story 13.0%
make a book 13.0%
take a walk 34.8%
Play with a pet 34.8%

Figure 9b
Parent First and Second Grade Surveys: Least five activities

Results noted in figure 9b tend to make researchers think that telling a story and making a book, although not chosen by the child during free time, were activities that could perhaps be grouped under school related activities, noted in the top five chosen activities.

Another source of information for this study were the students' input. The Student Interest Surveys were given in a pre- and post fashion also. Results were analyzed and recorded to determine if students noted any changes in their interests. The results of students' top five and least five chosen activities can be viewed in Figures 10b, 11b, 12b, 13b, 14b, and 15b, respectively.

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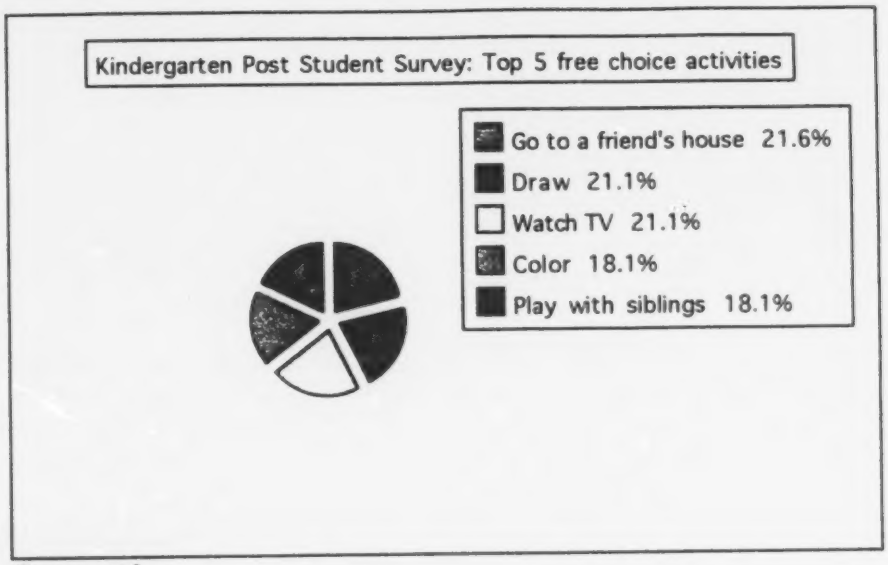
Kindergarten Post Student Survey: Top 5 free choice activities
Go to a friend's house 21.6%
Draw 21.1%
Watch TV 21.1%
Color 18.1%
Play with siblings 18.1%

Figure 10b

Student Kindergarten Survey: Top five activities

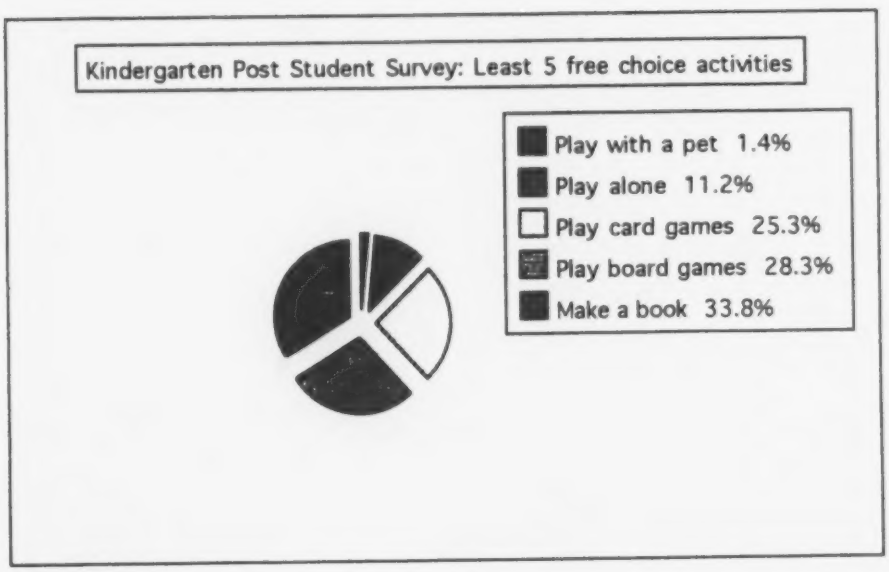
Kindergarten Post Student Survey: Least 5 free choice activities
Play with a pet 1.4%
Play alone 11.2%
Play card games 25.3%
Play board games 28.3%
Make a book 33.8%

Figure 11b

Student Kindergarten Survey: Least five activities

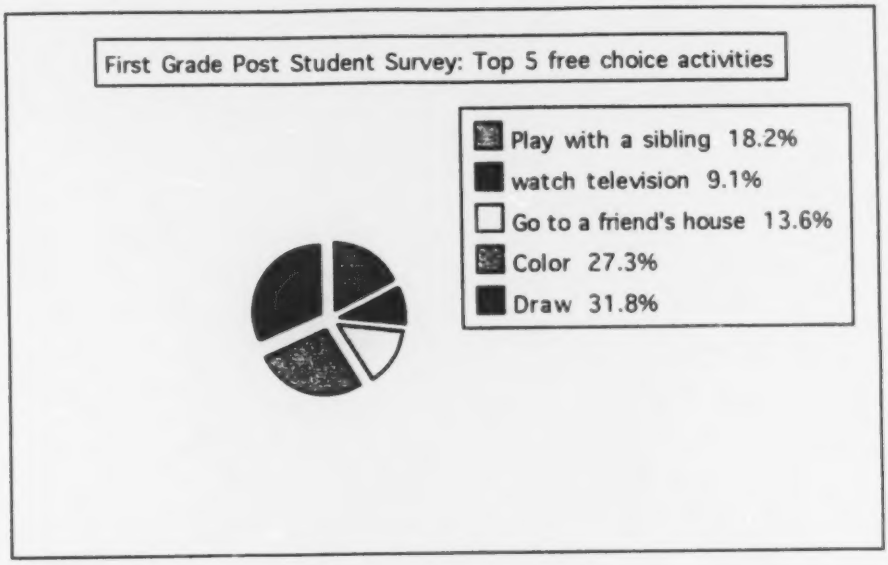
First Grade Post Student Survey: Top 5 free choice activities
Play with a sibling 18.2%
watch television 9.1%
Go to a friend's house 13.6%
Color 27.3%
Draw 31.8%

**Figure 12b**
**Student First Grade Survey: Top five activities**

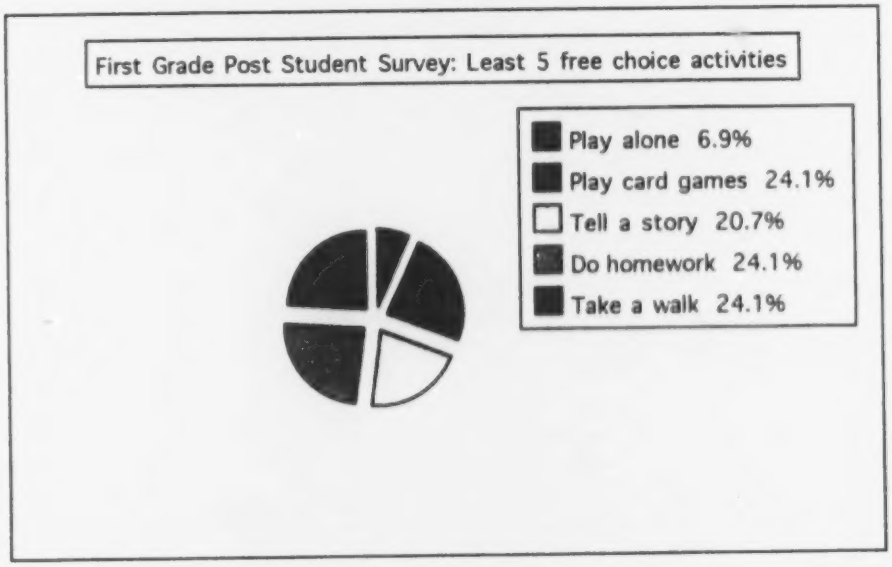
First Grade Post Student Survey: Least 5 free choice activities
Play alone 6.9%
Play card games 24.1%
Tell a story 20.7%
Do homework 24.1%
Take a walk 24.1%

**Figure 13b**
**First Grade Student Survey: Least five activities**



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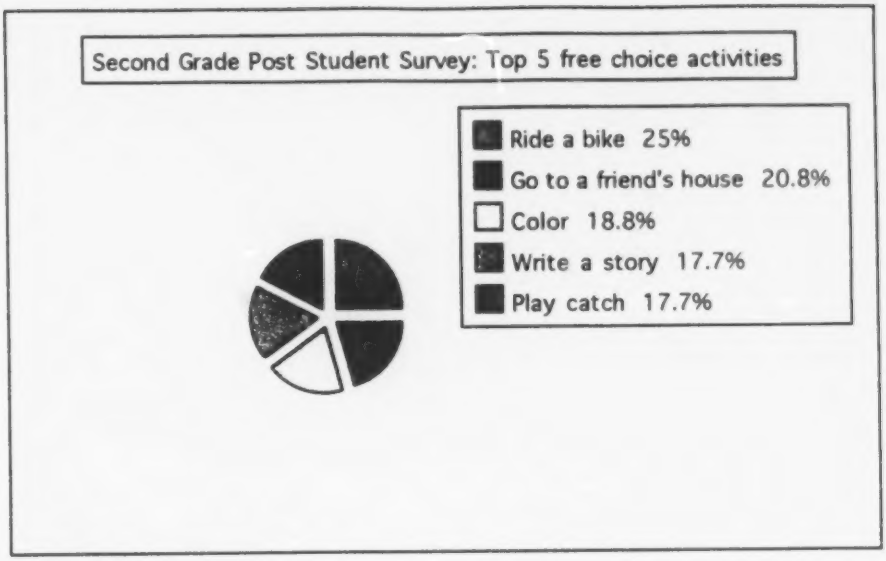
Second Grade Post Student Survey: Top 5 free choice activities
Ride a bike 25%
Go to a friend's house 20.8%
Color 18.8%
Write a story 17.7%
Play catch 17.7%

Figure 14b

Student Second Grade Survey: Top five activities

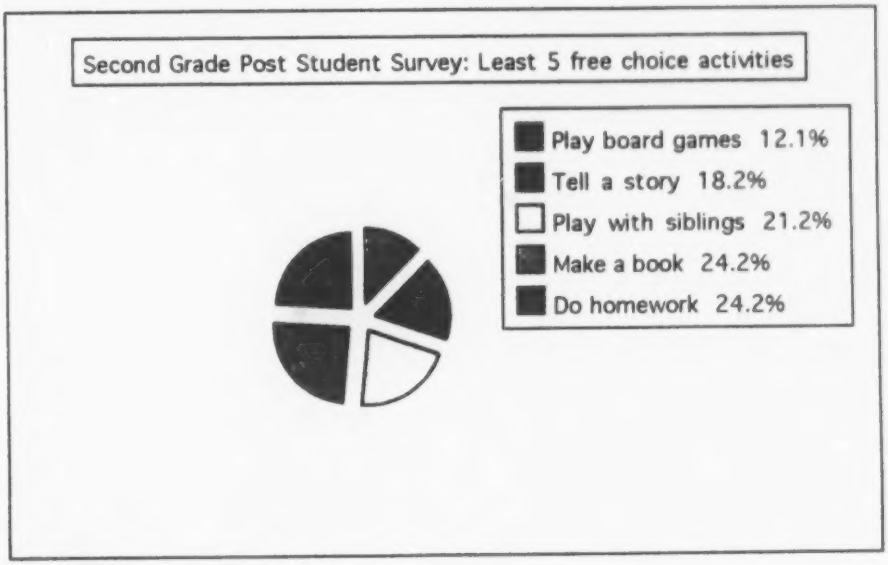
Second Grade Post Student Survey: Least 5 free choice activities
Play board games 12.1%
Tell a story 18.2%
Play with siblings 21.2%
Make a book 24.2%
Do homework 24.2%

Figure 15b

Student Second Grade Survey: Least five activities

Post student surveys at the kindergarten, first, and second grade levels do not show desired results. Pre- results indicated an overall negative attitude towards some school related activities. However, results were very inconsistent to draw any major conclusions regarding students' views and motivation towards the designated activities. The researchers concluded that the students' perceptions of the phrases used in the survey such as, homework, making a book, and telling a story, were limited and therefore often appear negative. When researchers spoke to the students informally about Activity Bags or similar activities, they responded in a more positive manner.

Researchers also concluded that if student survey questions were more specific, perhaps the students' true feelings would have showed. Researchers noticed that teacher observation was a much more efficient way to determine the increase of motivation the interventions elicited, when it reflected the student input.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data on how student motivation is effected by parent involvement, the students showed an increase of motivation for classroom related activities at home. All interventions were positive components. Researchers witnessed enhanced motivation on behalf of parent and child. Teachers felt all interventions helped strengthen the home-to-school, school-to-home relationship. Working together as a team can bring positive results. The students showed an increase in motivation, self adequacy, and self worth. Parents who received frequent and effective communication seemed to show a higher respect for the teacher, sense of comfort with the school, and had a higher level involvement with their child's education, and seemed to show a higher confidence level in their ability to reinforce what their child learns. Researchers concluded that they would continue Read to Succeed, Activity Bags, and Pull the Plug for the remainder of the year, and implement these same concepts as well as the Parent Workshops in future years, with a few modifications and additions. The following are conclusions and recommendations on each of the interventions implemented.

Read to Succeed

All grade levels felt this to be successful. However, both targeted schools currently have a whole school motivational reading program. Researchers felt Read to Succeed could be better modified to coincide with this existing program. Since second grade has a required curriculum that utilizes reading materials from across the curriculum, it is felt that Read to Succeed and Activity Bags could be a combined concept. This would incorporate all curricular topics and create an atmosphere for "book reviews", which would in turn prepare them for third grade expectations. First grade felt that there might be an easier way to document the participation, since the activity was successful class wide, this could be a modification in the Read to Succeed documentation slip. For example, requiring only parent signature. Kindergarten felt the students had positive reactions with seeing their Read Aloud Charts fill up when completed.

Activity Bags

Kindergarten and first grade teachers enjoyed Activity Bags and felt they were successful. Both teachers would implement this in future years with the addition of new ideas for the bags. The second grade teacher felt this program could have been more

successful if the bags were designed around the existing curriculum. Creating new activities on top of the existing expectations was too time consuming.

Pull The Plug TV Free Activities

Although kindergarten and first grade did not implement the program, they felt it would be beneficial to explore the possibility of implementing this program school wide. If Pull the Plug were to replace the school wide motivational reading program, it would allow each teacher to implement a tailored reading program unique to their classroom. This would eliminate any conflict between classroom and school wide reading programs, as well as being a motivational experience for all.

Second grade will implement this program in future classrooms. A modification recommendation would be how the children document their television free experiences. For example, a journal could be kept for placing each television free slip. This way at the end of the year, the results could be easily seen and handled. This would eliminate a compiling mass of slips in a desk or cubby.


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Parent Make and Take Workshops

All researchers agreed that Make and Take Workshops were successful and should be continued for all future classrooms. New ideas from other areas of the curriculum would be beneficial. Adapting the workshop philosophy to coincide with a classroom project or theme would allow parents to involve themselves in the classroom atmosphere during the school day. A modification could be to have parents help set up for the Make and Take Workshops, so to minimize the time that the individual teacher has to put in. Another idea is to create the workshop atmosphere during the school day while the children are there. This way parents can get a first hand look of how and what their child learns, and they will be learning right along with their child.

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# Appendices

# Appendix A
## Pre Student Interest Survey

These are all activities that you can do when you have some free time at home. Color the face after the activity to tell how much you like to do that activity at home.

| | I LIKE IT ALOT! | I LIKE IT A LITTLE. | I DON"T LIKE IT, YUK! |
|---|---|---|---|
| play card games | | | |
| tell a story | | | |
| make a book | | | |
| ride a bike | | | |
| play Video Games | | | |
| play catch | | | |
| draw | | | |
| read | | | |
| do a puzzle | | | |
| play a board game | | | |
| homework | | | |
| writing | | | |
| coloring | | | |
| watch TV | | | |
| take a walk | | | |
| play alone | | | |
| go to a friend's house | | | |
| play with brother/sister | | | |
| spend time with a pet | | | |
| use scissors or glue | | | |

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# Appendix B
## Post Student Interest Survey

These are all activities that you can do when you have some free time at home. Color the face after the activity to tell how much you like to do that activity at home.

| | I LIKE IT ALOT! | I LIKE IT A LITTLE. | I DON'T LIKE IT, YUK! |
|---|---|---|---|
| play card games | | | |
| tell a story | | | |
| make a book | | | |
| ride a bike | | | |
| play Video Games | | | |
| play catch | | | |
| draw | | | |
| read | | | |
| do a puzzle | | | |
| play a board game | | | |
| homework | | | |
| writing | | | |
| coloring | | | |
| watch TV | | | |
| take a walk | | | |
| play alone | | | |
| go to a friend's house | | | |
| play with brother/sister | | | |
| spend time with a pet | | | |
| use scissors or glue | | | |

Do you like any of these things MORE since the beginning of the year? Yes No
What do you like more?_____

Do you like any of these things LESS since the beginning of the year? Yes No
What do you like less?_____

What do you think made you change your mind about these things?_____
_____



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# Appendix C
## Pre Parent Survey

Dear Parents
Please take a few moments to answer the following questions

Please indicate O for OFTEN S for SOMETIMES and R for RARELY

____1. Do you read aloud to your child?
____2. Do you discuss the day's activities with your child?
____3. Do you play with you child each day?
____4. Do you share activities such as cooking experimenting or gardening?
____5. Does your child ask questions?
____6. Is an adult family member at home when your child comes home from school?
____7. Does your child go to a daycare service or a babysitter after school?
____8. Do you go to the library with your child?
____9. Does your child watch more than 2 1/2 hours of television each day?
___10. Does your child use a computer at home:
____a) to play games?
____b) for educational purposes?
___11. Does your child have chores and/or responsibilities?

What are the top 3 things your child likes to do in his/her spare time?
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are your favorite activities to do with your child?
_____
_____
_____

During free time, in the last six months, has your child chosen the activities listed below?
Please indicate "O" for OFTEN, "S" for SOMETIMES, and "R" for RARELY.

____card games
____tell a story
____make a book
____ride a bike
____play a video game
____play catch
____drawing
____reading
____do a puzzle
____play a board game
____school related activities
____writing
____coloring
____watch T.V.
____play alone
____go to a friend's house
____play with siblings
____paint
____use scissors/glue



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# Appendix D
# Post Parent Survey

Dear Parents:
Please take a few moments to answer the following questions

Please indicate "O" for OFTEN, "S" for SOMETIMES, and "R" for RARELY

____1. Do you read aloud to your child?
____2. Do you discuss the day's activities with your child?
____3. Do you play with you child each day?
____4. Do you share activities such as cooking experimenting, or gardening?
____5. Does your child ask questions?
____6. Is an adult family member at home when your child comes home from school?
____7. Does your child go to a daycare service or a babysitter after school?
____8. Do you go to the library with your child?
____9. Does your child watch more than 2 1/2 hours of television each day?
____10. Does your child use a computer at home:
    ____a) to play games?
    ____b) for educational purposes?
____11. Does your child have chores and/or responsibilities?

What are the top 3 things your child likes to do in his/her spare time?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are your favorite activities to do with your child?

_____
_____
_____

During free time, in the last six months, has your child chosen the activities listed below?
Please indicate "O" for OFTEN, "S" for SOMETIMES, and "R" for RARELY.

____card games
____tell a story
____make a book
____ride a bike
____play a video game
____play catch
____drawing
____reading
____do a puzzle
____play a board game
____school related activities
____writing
____coloring
____watch T.V.
____play alone
____go to a friend's house
____play with siblings
____paint
____use scissors/glue



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Does your child spend free time differently since you answered this survey in September? If so, what changes have you noticed and what do you feel contributed to these changes?

Have your interactions with your child changed since September? If so, how and what do you feel contributed to these changes?

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# Appendix E
## Teacher Survey

**TEACHER SURVEY**

1. What do you feel contributes to student low academic achievement?

2. What factors contribute to students' lack of motivation?

3. How do you provide ways for parents to reinforce their child's skills at home? How often?

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# Appendix F
## Read to Succeed Introduction Letters

## Read To Succeed!!
## A Kindergarten Read-Aloud Program

Children learn to read by reading and being read to. The most important way you can help your child become a successful reader and install a lifelong love of books is by reading with your child and encouraging him/her to read with you.

You've already started this process years before your child entered Kindergarten. I would like to reinforce this by sending home monthly Read-Aloud Charts. I am asking you to read aloud with your child daily and to record the titles of the books you read on the Read-Aloud Chart. The chart can be returned to school when full, or turn it over and add more titles on the back if time permits! At the end of the month, return the chart to school, even if there are only a few book titles on it. Each child who returns his/her chart will be given a monthly reading certificate. As an additional bonus, each time your child participates in 3 month's Read-Alouds, he/she will be able to pick a prize from our treasure box. Prizes will include things like: pencils, bookmarks, stickers...

Just think, if you fill in each month's chart from September through May, you will have read almost 200 books with your child. Imagine...almost 200 books! Reading...What a great gift to share with your child!!

September's Read-Aloud Chart is attached. Happy reading! Don't forget to take a few seconds to write down the titles of the books you have read with your child. Books can be recorded more than once if your child has asked you to read it more than one time. If you do not have many books available at home, the Mt. Prospect Public Library and Fairview Library are great resources. My books, which are in our classroom library, are also available for your use. Please drop me a note to let me know if you would like to use our classroom library as a resource. I'd be happy to set up a classroom lending library system for you.

I look forward to seeing the charts at the end of September! Thanks so much for your support!

Sincerely,

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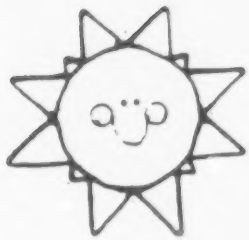
## Shared Reading

Reading aloud with your child is one of the most valuable gifts you can give to her or him. Sharing books with children can help them develop important reading and language skills necessary for successful learning. Books help to foster imagination and creativity as well. Allow books to play an important role in your child's life by trying some of these ideas at home:

- Establish a regular time to read. Some of the best times to read to your child are right after dinner, just before bedtime, or during other quiet times when your child won't be easily distracted.
- Choose a well-lit and comfortable place in your home to read. When you are reading to your child, be sure to position the book so that he or she can see the pictures and print.
- Rereading favorite stories helps a great deal in reinforcing your child's reading skills. You may also want to visit the library with him or her and choose books for you to read together.



## Independent Reading

You can play a vital role in developing your child's interest in becoming an independent reader. Make sure you have plenty of books in your child's room and around the house. Gather storybooks, picture books, or children's magazines for your child to read on rainy days, on long car trips, or while waiting at the dentist's office. The more interesting reading material you provide and the more praise you give your child for his or her attempts at reading, the more motivated your child will be to read.

**Did you know that...**

**good readers become successful learners? Each time you read to your child you enhance his or her language skills and imagination. Each time your child sees you reading, it sends a message that reading is both important and enjoyable. Children whose families value books become students for whom reading and learning are important.**



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# "Read To Succeed"
# At Home

**Dear Parents.**

Children learn to read by reading and by being read to. The most important way you can help your child become a stronger reader and install a lifelong love of books is by reading with your child and encouraging him or her to read to you.

You have already started this process years before school began. I'd like to reinforce this by sending home daily reading assignments. Monday through Thursday, your child will be bringing home either a book from our classroom library or his/her reading textbook.

Please spend some time with your child on these nights reading and discussing these books. Some of these stories will be familiar to your child. Some may be brand new. At the beginning of the year, you may be doing a lot of the reading and modeling for your child. As they become more confident, they may choose to do more, or all of the reading.

Sitting down and reading with your child should create a comfortable and risk-free environment. In order to prevent your child from becoming frustrated, choose a strategy from below.

Depending on how comfortable your child is with reading:

1. Read the entire selection to your child.
2. Echo read the story: you read a section and then have your child read the same section.
3. Buddy read: take turns reading page by page, you read a page, then your child reads a page.
4. Read the entire story and then have your child read it to you.
5. Choral reading: read the book out loud together.
6. Have your child read the story to you.

****When you are finished reading follow up with some questions about characters, setting, problem, ending, order of events...

Find what works best for you and your child and add some variety. Depending on how comfortable your child is with reading, you may be doing more or less of the reading. Don't be concerned with this. The purpose of this assignment is to increase your child's confidence and view of themselves as a reader.

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# "Read To Succeed"
# In The Classroom

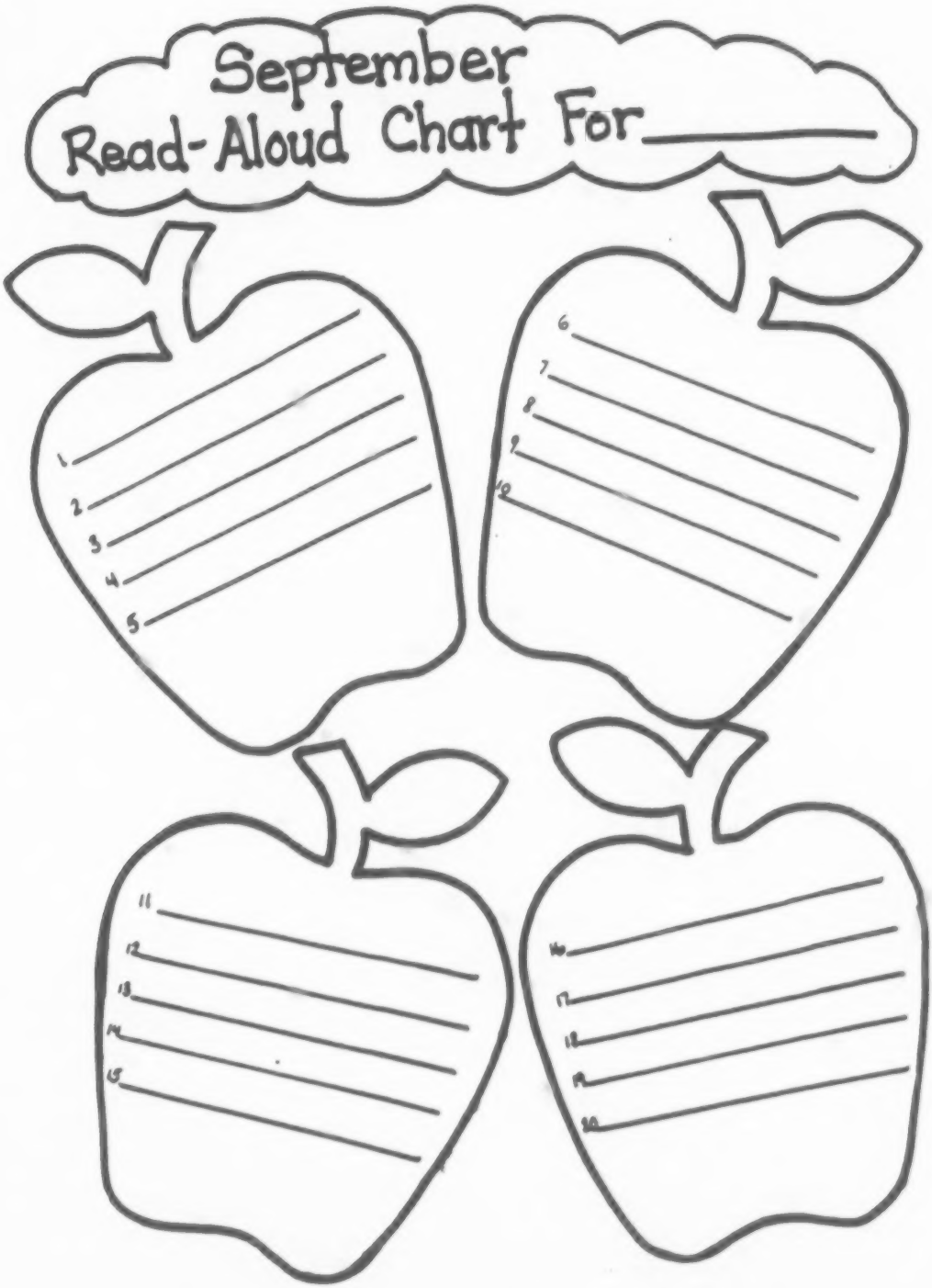
Monday through Thursday, your child will be bringing home a book from our classroom library or a reading textbook. Included with the book will be a half sheet of paper with our slogan, "Read To Succeed!" After you and your child have shared the story, please sign this sheet and return it along with the book, to school the very next day.

At the end of the week, if your child has completed all of the readings and has returned the books along with the "Read To Succeed!" slips, they will receive a sticker on our reading chart. Your child's goal is to collect 25 stickers. When this goal is met, he or she will be able to select a book from the book club.

As a short term goal, when your child obtains 5 stickers, he or she can choose something from the treasure box. They can choose from pencils, stickers, erasers, stampers, bookmarks, etc.

**HOP TO IT!**

Appendix G
Read Aloud Chart



# Read to Succeed

_____ is awarded
the Read to Succeed
certificate for
participating in the
September Read Aloud.

_____

# Appendix I
## Read to Succeed Recording Sheet

Today I read: _____

With: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Today I read: _____

With: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Today I read: _____

With: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____



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# Appendix J
## Activity Bag Introduction Letter

Dear Parents,

Twice a month your child will take home an activity bag containing materials that will reinforce important skills. Some of the activities may relate to math, science, language, reading, art, etc... Your child may keep this activity bag for one week.

Each bag will contain a list of materials needed, directions for the activities, and the materials needed for the activities. Crayons, pencils, scissors, and glue will not be provided. A comment card will also be included in the bag. Please take time to explore the materials with your child. Feel free to try new ideas and ways to use these materials.

At the end of the week take a few moments to express how both you and your child felt about the activities. Please comment on how often you used the bag, what you liked or disliked, and any new ideas you and your child tried. I'd really appreciate any feedback you have.

Help your child take responsibility for the care and return of the activity bag and all its contents. Many hours went into preparing these bags and it is very important for your child to understand that these bags should be enjoyed by all and everyone must take good care of them.

HAVE FUN!

Sincerely,

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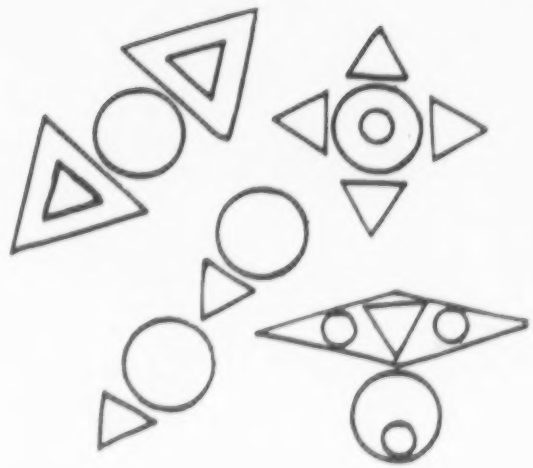
# Appendix K
## Sample Activity Bags



## Kaleidoscopes
## What Shape Is It? (a shape guessing game!)

Materials:
- *2 kaleidoscopes (teacher made & store bought)
- *Pattern blocks
- *Shape template
- *Pattern Block Fun--recording book
- *Design pages
- *Pencil, crayons, markers
- *Guessing bag

Activity Suggestions:

1. Experiment with the kaleidoscopes. Look at all the different patterns they can make.

2. Try to make some of the patterns you see using the pattern blocks.

3. Make new "kaleidoscope patterns/designs" using the pattern blocks. Record your design in the Pattern Block Fun book using the shape template. Don't forget to color it!

4. Pick a design page. Color your own patterns/designs. (color the whole page before taking a new page.)

5. Play: What Shape Is It?
   -Someone picks one "secret" pattern block shape and puts it into the guessing bag.
   -Players try to guess what shape is in the bag by asking questions.
   For example: Is it a hexagon?
   -The player who correctly guesses the shape gets to pick the next "secret" block.

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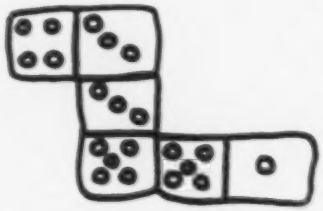
## Domino Activities
## Domino Sorting and Recording

Materials:
*Number cards 1-12
*(  ) Dominoes

Activity Directions:
1. Put the number cards in order from 1-12.
2. Sort the dominoes according to the total number of dots. Put them into lines under the appropriate number card.
3. Record number facts in a Domino Number Sentences book.
   *Choose 1 or 2 dominoes from under a number card.
   * Make a number sentence for each domino and record it on the corresponding page in the book.
   For example: The number sentence could be: 3 + 5 = 8
   -OR-
   5 + 3 = 8

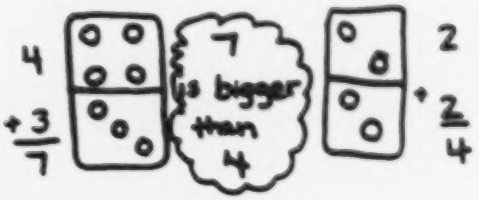
## Domino Activities:
## Play Dominoes



Materials:
*(  ) Dominoes

Activity Directions:
1. Spread the dominoes face down in a pile.
2. Turn 1 domino face up between the players.
3. Players take turns picking a domino from the pile and trying to match the dots to the dominoes in the middle.
4. If the dots can't be matched, the player keeps the domino until a later turn when it can be played.
5. The object of the game is to match all of the dominoes and create a crazy domino mess!

## Domino Activities:
## Play Domino Top-It




Materials:
(  ) Dominoes

Activity Directions:
1. Place all the dominoes face down between the players.
2. Each player chooses a domino and finds the total number of dots.
3. The player with the larger total gets both dominoes.
4. Play until all the dominoes are gone.
5. The player with the most dominoes at the end wins.

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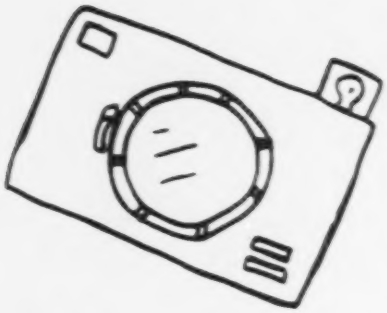

## Family Photo Album

Materials:
*Construction paper
*Large & small index cards
*Yarn
*Pencil, crayons, scissors, glue

Activity Suggestions:

1. Look through some family albums/photographs. Talk about who the people are and what is happening in the pictures.

2. Create your own album:
   -On a large index card, draw a picture of a family member or family activity/special event.
   -Have your child tell you something about the picture. Write down what he/she says on the small index card.
   -Glue your picture and card that tells about the picture onto a piece of construction paper.
   -Make as many pages for your album as you want.
   -Create a cover for your photo album. Tie the completed album together with yarn.

3. Help your child write and mail a letter to a family member/relative/friend.

Have Fun!!

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## Franklin's Adventures

Materials:
*5 Franklin books
*Franklin's Adventures notebook
*Pencil, crayons
*Franklin puppet

Directions For Activity:
Read and discuss some of the stories.
Talk about other possible adventures Franklin could have. Tell your own *Franklin* stories.

Have some fun with Franklin. In the notebook provided, draw pictures and write about Franklin's adventures at your house. Don't forget to write your name on your page(s).

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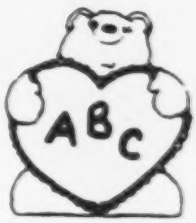
## Alphabet Activities
## Apples & Worms--Letter Matching

Materials:
Apples and worms pieces
ABC line

Activity Suggestions:
- -Put all the apples in one area.
- -Put all the worms in another area.
- -Take turns matching the capital letter on the apple with it's lowercase letter on the worm.
- -When all the apples have been matched, players should tell each other the letters they matched.
- -For a challenge, try putting the apples and worms in ABC order.

(Use the ABC line or sing the alphabet song if unsure about what letter comes next!)

## Alphabet Activities
## Alphabet Toss



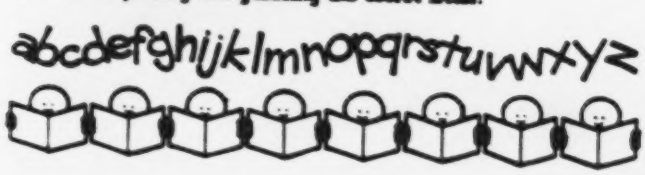

Materials:
- *Alphabet toss mat and bean bag
- *ABC cards

Activity Suggestions:
- -Spread out the alphabet toss playing mat.
- -Each turn consists of:
  - -picking an ABC card from the pile.
  - -naming the letter on the card picked.
  - -trying to throw the bean bag onto the same letter on the mat.
- -If the bean bag lands on the letter you picked, you get one point.
- -The first player to reach 10 points is the winner!
- -Don't forget to show good sportsmanship!

## Alphabet Activities
## Secret Letter Guessing Game

Materials:
- *Alphabet line
- *ABC cards

Activity Suggestions:
- -Pick a "secret" letter by picking an ABC card from the pile.
- -Have your child ask questions to guess the letter you are holding.
- -Answer the questions by saying whether the letter is: Before, After, or is the secret letter.
- -The green and red monsters will help to limit the possibilities and point to the secret letter.
  - -Move the green monster on the ABC line to show when the secret letter comes after the letter guessed.
  - -Move the red monster on the ABC line to show when the secret letter comes before the letter guessed.
- -Take turns picking and guessing the secret letter.

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Appendix L
Activity Bag Comment Card

## Activity Bag # _____

Please rate the activities:
1 star -- lowest  5 stars -- highest

## What did you think?

How often did you use the bag?
What did you like or dislike?
How did your child feel about the activities?

## Comments:

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Appendix M
Pull the Plug Introduction Letter

# PULL THE PLUG:
# TV FREE ACTIVITIES!

## What is it?.....Why pull the plug?

Pull the plug is a challenge from your teacher. Pulling the plug is meant to encourage the children to choose activities other than watching TV or playing video games. The time spent with video games and television decreases the time that is spent with activities like reading, writing, drawing, talking, or playing games with family members.

## When should we pull the plug?

As often as you like! However, the goal is to pull the plug at least once a week, for 30 minutes at a time. One pull the plug sheet will go home each week on Friday. Additional sheets will be available in the classroom as needed. Complete and return the sheets to school when your child has chosen a TV free activity. Your child will have a special place at school to keep them. It is your child's responsibility to make certain the sheets are put in their proper place.

## How Does this work?.....What are the goals?

If your child chooses an alternative activity, simply complete the sheet and return it to school. Each month all children who participate will be entered into a monthly raffle. Prizes will consist of TV free activities. Children who have participated at least 4 times a month will earn a certificate of achievement.

## What are some TV free activities?

I'm sure you will come up with your own ideas, but here are some of mine. Some of these you can do together, some your child can do alone.

- *read
- *tell a story
- *color
- *make a book
- *write a story
- *do a puzzle
- *make a puppet
- *ride your bike
- *go to the library
- *draw
- *write a letter
- *play catch
- *cook or bake
- *exercise
- *play educational computer game


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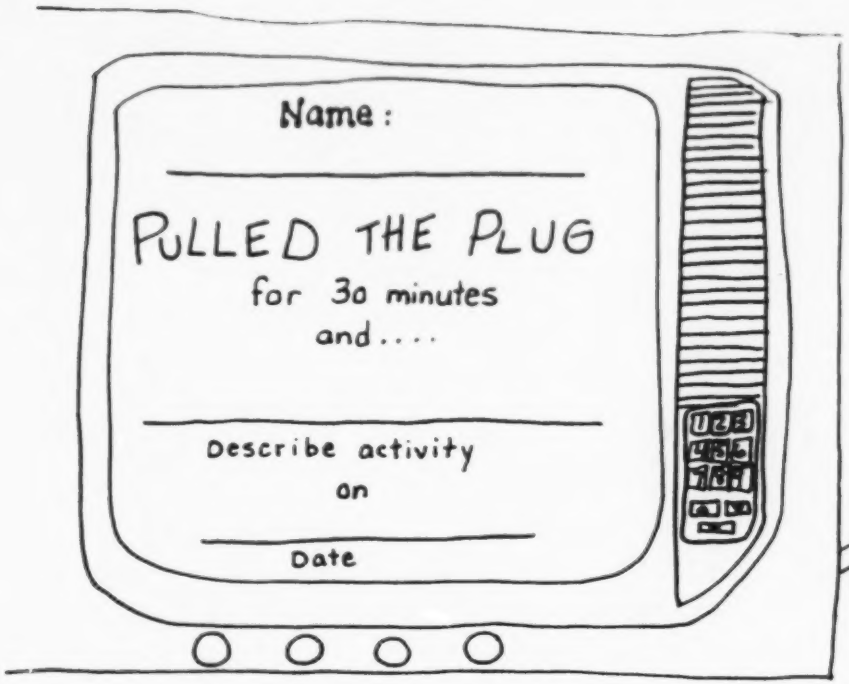


Parent Signature:

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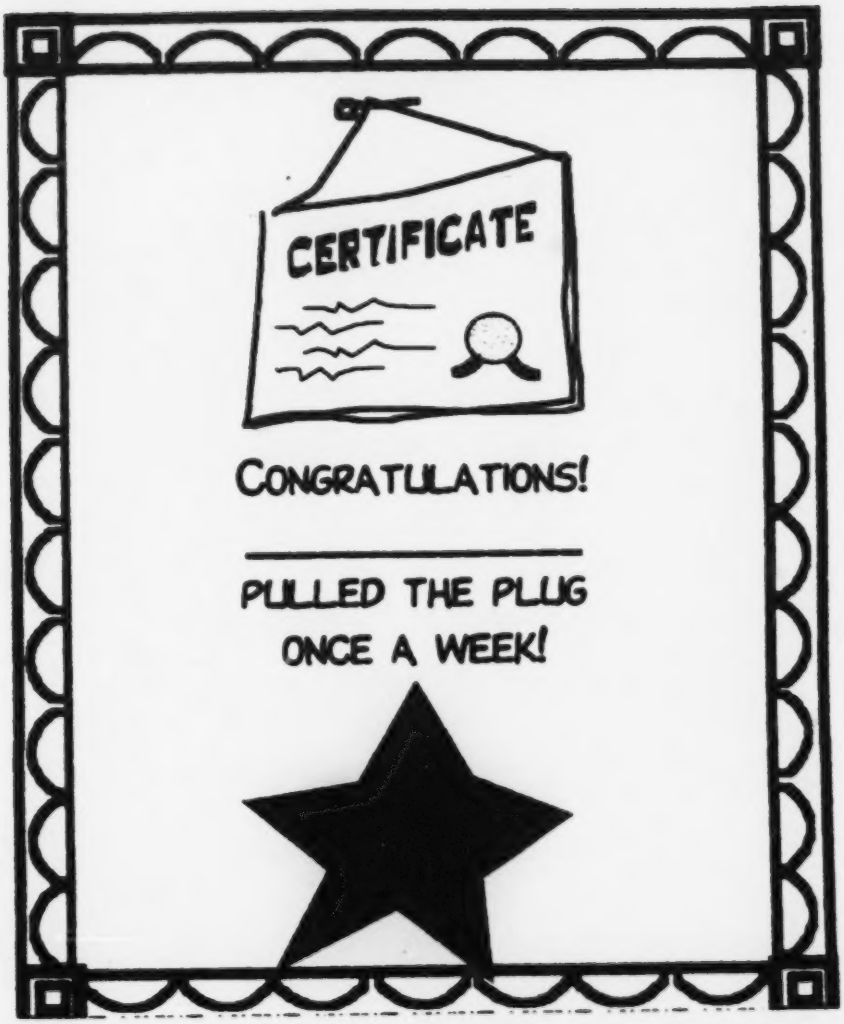
## Appendix O
## Pull the Plug Certificate



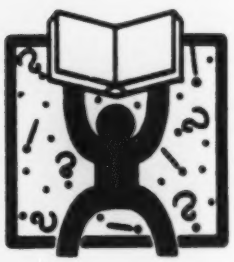
## Appendix P
## Parent "Make and Take" Workshop Flyers

Literacy strategies to help support your child

Make and Take Activities

# Mrs. Bruno's First Grade Family Reading Night

Monday, January 27, 1997
7:00 P.M.
Fairview LRC



Refreshments Served!!

Prizes!

This is intended to be a fun evening for you and your first grader. Please make other arrangements for siblings. Thank You!

Read-a-thon!

Build a poem, write a poem

Retelling station



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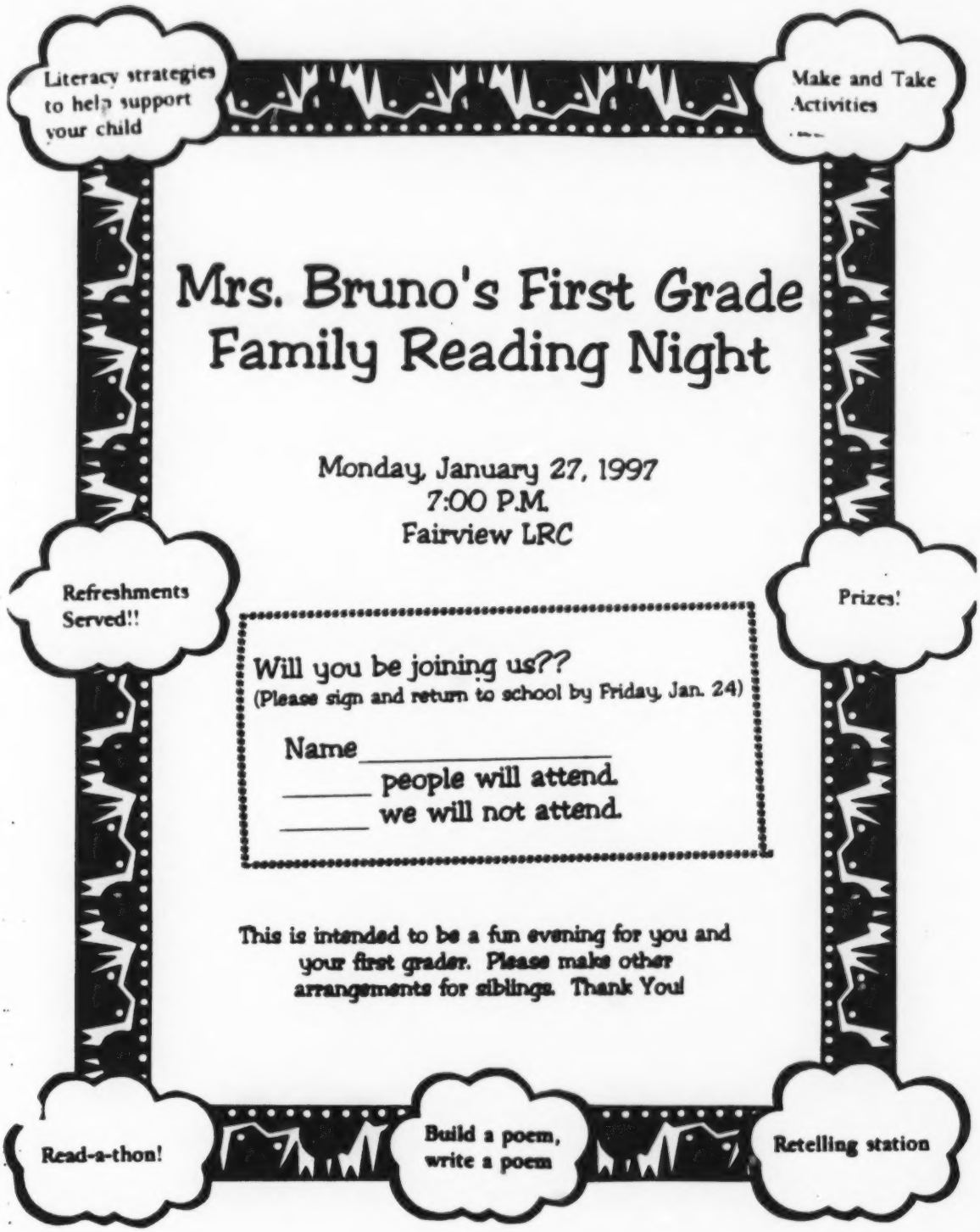


# Mrs. Bruno's First Grade Family Reading Night

Monday, January 27, 1997
7:00 P.M.
Fairview LRC

Will you be joining us??
(Please sign and return to school by Friday, Jan. 24)

Name_____
_____ people will attend.
_____ we will not attend.

This is intended to be a fun evening for you and your first grader. Please make other arrangements for siblings. Thank You!



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# Appendix Q
## Sample "Make and Take" Workshop Agenda

## Mrs. Bruno's First Grade Reading Night

I. **Welcome**

II. **Icebreaker--Yarn Webs**

III. **Children-- Select Books For Read-A-Thon**

IV. **Parents:**
- A. Helping reinforce your child's reading strategies
- B. Benefits of reading aloud
- C. Book Buzz--discussion questions

V. **Read-A-Thon**
(Parents begin reading with own child. At bell, all parents switch to read with another child Pick up where last adult left off reading)

VI. **The Mitten**
- A. Have volunteer read the story
- B. Retell the story with help of the adults and children
  (adults give the storyline--children use the props)

VII. **Make-And-Take**
- A. Build-A-Poem
- B. Write a diamond poem
- C. Retelling pieces for the mitten

VIII. **Workshop Evaluation**

# Appendix R
## Cumulative Parent Survey

Parent Survey
Parent Workshops/Make and Take Nights

*Please make an "x" for workshops attended (if any)

___reading ___math

*Were make and take activities useful for you and your child? ___Yes ___No
Please explain.

*Workshop Thoughts...

| Positive Aspects | Comments/Suggestions |
|---|---|
| | |

Read To Succeed

*Has this effected your child's motivation towards reading? ___Yes ___No
Please explain.

Read To Succeed Thoughts . . .

| Positive Aspects | Comments/Suggestions |
|---|---|
| | |

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Parent Survey
Activity Bags

*Did you feel activity bags were helpful? __Yes __ No
Please explain.

*How have activity bags impacted your child/family?
Please explain.

*Which activity bag(s) did you/your child enjoy most?
(Please write name of activity or describe the activity or materials).

| Activity Bag Thoughts... | |
|---|---|
| Positive Aspects | Comments/Suggestions |
| | |

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